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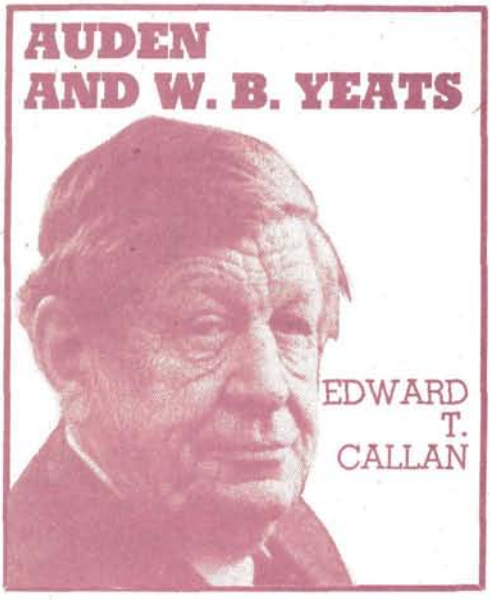

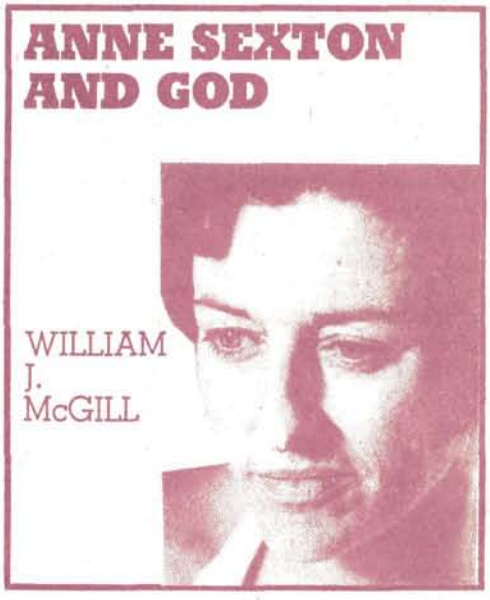

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NEWS & VIEWS

Hear, Hear

Some plain talk from the Secretary for Education of the U.S. Catholic Conference, Msgr. Olin Murdick, for dioceses bucking Catholic teachers' unions:

"To pose the economic difficulty for Catholic schools in complying with union demands is to argue that the end justifies the means. No matter how high a priority Catholic schools have among Catholic people, one is not justified in denying to teachers the right, collectively, to ask for a living wage. . . .

"If, in a last analysis, a given Catholic community cannot afford a Catholic school, it has no right to impose upon its teachers an unjust salary schedule, or to deny to teachers the right to participate collectively in the determination of that fact."

Murdick's remarks were made at a panel discussion at the recent National Catholic Educational Association Convention in San Francisco.

Fishy Politics

If you're wondering why Russia didn't react like a harpooned whale over U.S. seizures of its fishing boats recently in New England waters, *The Economist* of London for April 16 may furnish a clue.

It couldn't, at least not gracefully, for it is being even tougher about Japanese boats within its 200-mile water zone.

Japan lives on fish, and about one-sixth of this fish comes from seas off the east coast of Siberia. In March, these waters became part of Russia's 200-mile economic zone, and as of this writing the Russians have refused to allow the Japanese to fish within the zone, even for a fee. All Japanese fishing boats were withdrawn on March 31. Negotiations are at an impasse.

Ostensible sticking point is Russian insistence that their 200-mile zone includes waters surrounding four islands north of Hokkaido, which the Russians occupied during World War II but which the Japanese insist are still theirs.

But the real trouble, according to *The Economist*, is that the Russians are using fish as an excuse for raising almost every disagreement that they have with Japan. These include last fall's Mig 25 incident (when the Japanese allowed the U.S. to study a top-secret plane landed in Japan by a defecting Soviet pilot), and Japan's warming relations with China, which Russia disapproves of strongly.

What it all translates to, in *The Economist*'s words, is that "Russia has Japan by its fish-eating throat."

Stars, Stripes & Pall

The Liturgical Commission of the Archdiocese of New York, with characteristic American Catholic God-and-country sensitivity, has issued an instruction of the use of the pall and the national flag at funeral services.

"It is preferable," says the instruction, "that the flag on the coffin be replaced by the pall" for the services. At the same time, "it is most important that the pall not be seen as an 'anti-war,' 'anti-military,' or any other gesture than the positive statement of the Christian dignity of the one being commended to God."

As for the flag, it should be folded "with the respect which is due it" upon entrance into the church. "The flag may then be carried in the funeral procession, on a cushion or tray, with medals or other insignia," to be placed again upon the casket at the conclusion of the Eucharist or the funeral service.

Also, according to the instruction, "It is suggested that the rituals at the beginning and end of Mass afford the homilist an opportunity to indicate that the deceased was a citizen of two worlds: loyally serving one's country is not only compatible with Christianity, but a part of true Christian service to one's community. We are called to render to God what is God's, and to Caesar what is Caesar's."

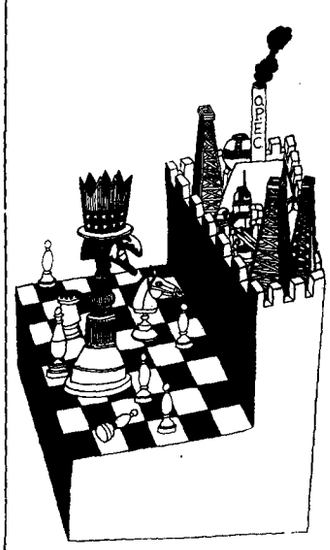
Virginia Update

Remember that "historic," Vatican-approved arbitration between a bishop and members of a Virginia parish that was to have helped settle the question whether a parish council is an advisory or a decision-making group? [News & Views, 11/5/76]

It turns out not to have been so historic after all, at least in terms of results.

Arbitration has broken, with Bishop Thomas J. Welsh of Arlington and dissidents at Good Shepherd parish in Alexandria accusing each other of acting in bad faith and not confronting the real issue in the three-year-old dispute.

"Any future meetings will depend on the Vatican," said Bishop Joseph Hodges of Wheeling-Charleston, West Va., the prelate named by the Vatican to arbitrate the contending points of view.



Liberation News Service

Bishop Welsh takes the traditional point of view that the parish council is set up to *advise* the parish; Good Shepherd dissidents claim that Vatican II gave the laity a shared responsibility in decision-making; Bishop Hodges summoned the respective parties for a discussion on "positive efforts for unity in the parish."

The dissidents' negotiating team balked at that, charging a change in focus and ground rules. They asked a postponement until Rome clarified the purpose of the arbitration.

Bishop Hodges cited Bishop Welsh for his "positive approach," and expressed disappointment "with the other side." Reportedly he is preparing a report for the Vatican, and dissidents fear that a decision on the dispute will be "made in Rome" based on that report.

Odds and Ends

— The saints may have suffered something of an eclipse in recent years, but the value of their letters is holding up . . . in the collector's market. An upstate New York autographs' house is offering a 1737 letter of St. Alphonsus Ligouri for $500, and a 1659 letter of St. Vincent de Paul for $875.

— Red faces at the *New York Times*, which on April 14 needed a hefty corrections' box to unscramble an April 13 editorial titled, alas, "Zaire Made Clear."

— Red faces, too, at NC New Service, which on page 18 of its April 7 service, had Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin praying at a pro-life convention that "through word and example may we always give witness to the sacredness of life, from the moment of contraception until death."

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Feeney & Rome

Ann Arbor, Mich.

To the Editors: Apparently the recent report on the activities of Father Leonard Feeney and his group is expected to relieve concern rather than to arouse it, and perhaps it has done so for some [Jan. 7]. Certainly one wants to see people who have bravely clung to a principle which, as they see it, is essential to Christian teaching, offered whatever consolation and honor the Catholic Church, which they believed that they were serving, can conscientiously provide.

At least two questions arise, however, of a kind that could be called religious or theological rather than purely administrative or disciplinary.

1. Some writers for Father Feeney's movement have made anti-Semitic statements on occasion. The statements are not readily glossed over as politically anti-Zionist, or otherwise excused. Apparently no attempt was made to get these statements repudiated or to get any promise that similar statements would not be made in the future.

2. Having been offered reconciliation with the Catholic Church, on what most people would regard as remarkably tolerant terms, a group at St. Benedict's Center has refused; Father Feeney, however, continues to celebrate Mass for them and, it seems, to give them Holy Communion. It is difficult indeed to understand how a priest can communicate a whole body of people who have been excommunicated and who have turned down the opportunity to be received back.

We are not dealing here with relatively anonymous lay Catholics who may hold, privately, many deplorable opinions and may do a variety of offensive things, some of which they think are morally right, and who still take part, with a clear conscience, in the sacramental life of the Church. Father Feeney's group constitutes a movement, with a deliberately adopted

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MR. CALIFANO ON QUOTAS

Joseph A. Califano Jr., Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, got himself burned recently in discussing racial and sexual employment quotas. He was not the first to run into trouble on this score, and he won't be the last. The role of quotas in reversing patterns of job and educational discrimination is tricky and, above all, controversial, as Mr. Califano soon discovered.

The Secretary started out, in an interview with the *New York Times*, by saying that it was possible and necessary to endorse preferential hiring and educational admissions policies. Asked Mr. Califano: "How am I, as Secretary of H.E.W., ever going to find first-class black doctors, first-class black lawyers, first-class black scientists, first-class women scientists, if these people don't have the chance to get into the best places [schools] in the country?" Mr. Califano's remarks came at a time when the Supreme Court had agreed to rule on the case of an applicant to the University of California medical school who has charged that he was denied admission because of a special program to admit minority students who, he argued, were less qualified than he. The stage is thus set for a national debate, with minorities and women seeking redress from past practices of bias pitted against white males who believe that they are now being made the victims of reverse discrimination.

Mr. Califano made his own views clear. "I am not sure what the ultimate technical, legal resolution of this case will be," he said. "But it is important that we not lose the ability to have affirmative action programs which would give minorities and women the opportunity to get into the major graduate schools and universities in the country." Serious efforts at redressing the balance pay off, in his view. "I noticed in recruiting that if

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you press people hard enough to cast the net wide enough, you find [minority and female] people." And he made it clear that his position included quotas. "For a long time," he said, "I didn't think quotas would work," but experience had changed his mind and he now favored them.

At that point Mr. Califano discovered that "quota" is an explosive word. A huge public clamor immediately ensued, with assorted unions taking large newspaper ads to protest against any suggestion of quotas and with 44 leading educators calling on President Carter to disavow his H.E.W. Secretary for what they saw as an intention "to discriminate against whites and males." Taken aback by the furor, Mr. Califano tried to calm things down by giving the *Times* another, corrective interview. In it he conceded that he had made a mistake when he said he advocated racial and sexual quotas as a means of redressing past discrimination. Of quotas he now said, in a clear understatement, "It's obviously a nerve-jangling word." What he really meant, Mr. Califano said, was equal opportunity for all. "Either because of past or on-going discrimination against minorities or women" there should be "affirmative action to rectify the situation." By that, he said, he meant special training courses and an effort to reach out and find deserving people, but not quotas that would require the admission of a certain percentage of blacks or women. As an example of what he meant on this score, Mr. Califano cited the Harvard Medical School's program of giving several months of pretraining to members of disadvantaged minorities before they entered medical school.

Mr. Califano's amendments seem to have taken the heat off him, at least for the moment. For this we are glad, for the Secretary's general remarks on discrimination show that his heart is in the right place, whatever protests that followed. But if the heat is off Mr. Califano, the national argument over quotas will not die, and should not. American society has long been permeated by racism and sexual bias, and verbal acknowledgement of this fact cannot cure the resultant evil effects in our society. Correcting this state of affairs will take positive action on every level, educational and economic. We are willing to grant to Mr. Califano's critics that quotas should not be the tool of first resort. Indeed, perhaps it would be better to talk in terms of "goals" rather than quotas, and in general affirmative action that "casts a wide net" is preferable. Job training efforts and serious attempts at remedial education can well be taken as indications of good intentions that make imposition of a quota system unnecessary. But when you find, for example, a police or fire department in an overwhelmingly black area with no blacks, a quota may be the only answer to begin to deal with the problem. And despite the protests of some segments of organized labor, when you find unions with a long history and a continuing practice of lily-white membership and hiring practices, a quota may simply be unavoidable. The same thing can be said in the cases of universities and colleges with only token blacks or women on their staffs or in their student body. In short, the first thought should not be a quota, but it should not be completely unthinkable either. For helping to clarify this fact, we can thank Mr. Califano.

WASHINGTON REPORT

EQUIVALENCE AND EQUIVOCATION

There have been moments following President Carter's address to Congress on the energy crisis when it has seemed that the main obstacle to solar energy flooding the land is that it's hard to make the sun a monopoly of the oil trust or your local light and power combine. No doubt the effort will be made. Indeed, the effort must be made, if we are to believe half the arguments about energy now being advanced. With only all-time record-breaking profits, such as those recently enjoyed by the oil cartel, the cartelians dare not take the risk of doing anything at all; the profits have to be higher ever higher and then higher than that to get them to move and grant us the heat, light and power we need to keep those snowmobiles destroying the wilderness, those stink pots destroying the peace and quiet of a day on bay or beach. As for our doing something ourselves, without paying tribute to the cartel, it's an unthinkable thought. Just as the nation has never been able to bring up the oil from its own oil-rich land reserves without an elaborate system of leasing the land to the oilmen for tokens and then buying back the oil they bring up at full prices, so it would be heresy for the government even to think about using solar power for its own purposes, worse, perhaps, for the private citizen to do so. Private enterprise is the foundation of the whole system, but it had better not get too private. Rest assured, it won't.

Such has been the main line of objections to the dim sketch of the energy policy of the President. My own objections have been more capricious. The first is simply that it has so far entered no one's head that by far the largest institutional user of energy of all kinds in this country is the Defense Establishment. Throwing a nickel-a-year per gallon tax rise on gas may indeed cut down on joy riding and drag racing—although that remains to be seen; but if you are a four-star joy rider

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in the wild blue, a gold-braid drag racer in the Eastern Med, you've got a permanent credit card and the bills never do come in. How to restrain the gas guzzlers known as the Joint Chiefs is a question that hasn't come up. It must if we are serious at all about the dread crisis.

The thing about normal energy systems is that they return the energy used in a different form and, usually, slightly lessened by normal, irreducible inefficiency: you use energy to get to work, but once there you produce a given number of blivets which represent energy in a different, more costly form. Waste is inherent in all systems and the prudent manager studies to keep it as low as possible. In Defense, as in snowmobiles and motor boats, the system operates for total waste. There is no energy return for the energy expended. In a program aimed at the conservation of energy, obviously such a system is the prime target. It is not, the subject hasn't been mentioned. The fact that the chief energy conservator is a former Secretary of Defense may or may not be a coincidence, but that experience may well have rendered him incapable of thinking those unthinkable thoughts that need thinking.

My other objection is rhetorical, I guess. I object to the President's re-cycling of Will James's old cry for a "moral equivalent of war" in the nation's coming to grips with the energy crisis. In the first place, of course, paying a nickel more for gas, even, eventually, half a buck more for gas, is a far cry from the sacrifices young men are asked to make on the field of battle or even in barracks-room life. That being so, it follows inexorably that these painful moments at the pump are not going to produce the results in morale, the formation of *esprit-de-corps*, that poor old James imagined might be done. Indeed, the preliminary acknowledgment of the profit motive as essential to the great task just about cancels out that martial moral equivalency all by itself. In wartime, we are routinely and emphatically assured that we are all in this together, sacrificing equally, nobody gaining and so on. It is only later that we discover some have been more equal than others, some, in fact, have made a bundle out of the universal sacrifice. Here, we are starting out putting those bundles for biggies to one side of the national offering and somehow it casts a shadow on one's enthusiasm for close order drill.

The main objection to the moral equivalency of war stuff, however, is the anachronism of it all. When James got off the line in the first place, the war in question was The Great War, which was still genuinely understood in terms of The Dreadnought Boys and George M. Cohan. Shortly thereafter, we learned a lot of things about old W. W.-Roman-Numeral-One that retroactively dismantled the *esprit-de-corps* James understandably thought inherent in war. More recently, of course, we have been through a quite different kind of war and it is that war that the word stands for in the minds of most Americans. It is not difficult at all—and not very inspiring—to guess at what the moral equivalent of Vietnam might be in the energy crisis.

At the very start, of course, Carter has blown the equivalency by announcing the war in advance. If this were a true moral equivalency, he would be inching into the war, placating the generals every few months with another 50,000 troops while assuring the nation that nothing out of the way was happening at all, that we should all concentrate on leading the good life even better.

Eventually, thousands of young men would be drafted to work on the pipe line—if you have to ask what pipe line, you're not ready for moral equivalency. Thousands of others would flee to Canada or Sweden to avoid working on the pipe line. The CIA would put a mail drop on the chairmen of the boards of the oil cartel. The FBI would infiltrate gas station operators, instigate wildcat price rises at the pumps and then haul their instigated wildcatters off to trial for conspiracy, proving to the nation that an alert force of peace officers was maintaining the peace. Henry Kissinger, an expert in the field, would be recalled to public service to order telephone eavesdropping taps placed on the reporters, editors and rewrite men who do those editorial advertisements Mobil is always running in the papers. Public television stations would be broken into by burglars from both the CIA and the FBI because public television is always running BBC programs sponsored by Exxon.

Meanwhile on the equivalent military front, the Pentagon might do a little surgical bombing on the Houston Petroleum Club, preferably at Christmas. Liddy and Hunt, recalled to active service, would break into the Rockefellers' towers of trade, jiggle with the ballast systems and cause those two monuments to topple into New York harbor. General Westmoreland, recalled to active service, would announce that we had to destroy the Rockefellers in order to save the Rockefellers. General Brown, who had never been *de*-cycled and thus didn't have to be *re*-cycled, would reveal in an off-the-record speech that the Rockefellers had all been Jews anyway, so what the hell?

At the top of the equivalency program, Brown and Westmoreland together would announce that they had ascertained, through reliable body count methods, that all oil tycoons had been eliminated and the world was now safe for snowmobiles. Even as they spoke, however, tycoons in black pajamas would be silently spreading through the land, raising the prices at the pumps.

Obviously, this exercise could go on for some time without running out of material, but you get the general idea.

Maybe what we really ought to be looking for, in energy and elsewhere, is a moral equivalent of peace.

FRANK GETLEIN

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FROM CANADA

THE FRENCH FACT

Several months have passed since the elections that brought René Lévesque's *Parti Québécois* to power in the National Assembly. Mr. Trudeau, on a state visit to Washington, assured a joint session of the United States Congress that the separation of Quebec from the Canadian federation is unthinkable, supported only by a "small minority" of the people of Quebec. Mr. Trudeau very carefully avoided the use of the term "nation" to describe the people of the province.

In a sense the Washington address was a departure from the Prime Minister's approach to the question since the elections. He has rarely spoken to the question except in response to direct questions from the press or audiences. In the Washington address the problem posed by Quebec separatism was described as the greatest single problem facing Canada today, aggravated by the fact that Canada has not yet created the conditions in which French-speaking Canadians have felt that they are fully equal, or could fully develop the richness of the culture they have inherited.

In a press conference the following day, Mr. Trudeau placed much of the onus of maintaining Canadian unity on the English-speaking population; the "French fact" has yet to be accepted by many English-speaking Canadians, as was clearly shown by last summer's strike of English-speaking airline pilots and air traffic controllers, who objected strongly to anyone flying airplanes over Quebec "in French."

During the election campaign, the *Parti Québécois* campaigned for good government, not separation, and there is little doubt that the *Péquist* victory was as much a rejection of the Bourassa Liberals as a victory for separatism. But Lévesque is now the premier in the National Assembly—the Quebec legislature has been so styled long before the present upsurge of Quebec nationalism—and has promised a referendum on the issue sometime before the end of his mandate. Neither Levesque nor his caucus are in any hurry. For the

DOING BUSINESS WITH BUSINESS

PETER STEINFELS

In my first hundred days under the Carter presidency, I have noted a major change—in the nature of my news clippings. More and more of them come from the business pages. More and more of them are punctuated with bar charts and pie graphs. Excavate down through the pile by the radiator, or finger carefully the precarious tower of items on the stereo speaker—whichever of my sophisticated filing systems I consult, the result is the same: fewer stories about international politics or Washington skullduggery, more about international trade, local unemployment and price indexes.

The latest cause is, of course, the national debate over energy policy. But the pattern is not new. Is this what it means to have an administration focusing on domestic issues? Or is it just my mood? In fact, the Carter administration has surprised everyone with its international activism, however inconclusive its negotiations with the Soviets, with the Middle Eastern nations, and with white and black Africa have been to date. Yet the negotiations that have fascinated me are those with the American business community.

That the real business of America is business is a lesson we relearn under Democrats. The business of Republicans is so obviously business that we tend to take for a party interest what is a national fact. Businessmen voted against Carter 8 to 1. Labor was his critical ally, lower-income voters his margin of victory. Nonetheless, since his election Carter's major effort has been to propitiate the business community.

The process began with Carter's appointments—Lance, Blumenthal and Schultze in the key economic posts. It continued with the relatively small dose of economic stimulants, about half the percentage of GNP that the Kennedy-Johnson tax cut of 1964 employed to spur an economy in which unemployment was considerably lower. Then commenced a period of wooing and reassuring business not seen since the "take-a-businessman-to-lunch" splurge with which the Kennedy administration tried to repair its run-in with the steel industry. Most recently Carter responded to the chorus of business wails about inflation by withdrawing his tax-rebate measure, but without doing anything directly about inflation except a voluntary program as unpromising as it is inoffensive.

All this makes perfectly good sense. It does not mean that Carter has gone to work for the "interests" rather than the "people." He is simply respecting reality, and the reality is the overwhelming power of the business community. He needs their coopera-

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moment their most important task is to provide good government, and the *Péquists* have already discovered that an opposition program is not quite adequate for the conduct of a government.

As the debate progresses, a number of Upper Canadian voices choose to speak in economic terms. We are told that Quebec is too small to form a viable nation, that foreign investment would be driven out, that some large corporations would move from Montreal to Toronto. René Lévesque and his party do not appear to be impressed. There is a real question as to whether Quebec's economy would be better oriented on a North-South axis, the present East-West relationship, or some combination of both. One wonders whether the economy is the central issue, or whether the political separation of Quebec would really entail significant changes. Many observers, even in these days of recognized governmental responsibility for the "management" of the economy, have questioned the extent to which Ottawa can effectively manage an economy so dominated by the United States. And while few have dared to say it out loud, it is possible that most of the economic arguments against Quebec's separation would apply with equal force to Canada's separation from the United States.

Another question that appears to be beneath the dignity of most politicians committed to the Confederation is the political future of a Canada without Quebec. Both Mr. Stanfield, the former Conservative leader, and Mr. Clark, the incumbent leader of the opposition, are committed to federalism. Yet it is obvious to everyone that the fortunes of the Liberal Party would suffer a dramatic reversal were Quebec to separate. The Liberal majority in the Commons depends absolutely on the traditionally Liberal vote (in federal politics) of Quebec, and for the moment at least, a Canada without Quebec could look forward to a solid Tory majority in Ottawa. Both Conservative leaders worked hard—with little success—to build a constituency in Quebec. Ironically, this involved some support of the conservative *Union Nationale* in Quebec, whose unexpected showing in the November elections may have made the *Péquist* majority possible.

Beyond Quebec—politically and geographically—are the Atlantic provinces. Paul MacEwan, a Nova Scotia M.L.A. (Member of the Legislative Assembly) from Cape Breton, having predicted Lévesque's victory in a book published shortly before the Quebec elections, goes on to discuss the future of the Maritimes: "There is no doubt that very soon after Quebec independence,

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tion. I am not suggesting a conspiracy, a handful of robber barons huddled in a clubroom and deciding whether to make or break Jimmy Carter. But whether or not the tax rebates are inflationary, if some thousands of American business leaders think they are inflationary (and the group can number 10,000 or 500,000 without its being more than one-fourth of one percent of the population) then the power of this elite is such, that the tax rebates *will be* inflationary. You may think that the pilot of an airplane is not doing a very good job, you may offer suggestions, dangle incentives, even cajole with a few threats; but you are not going to try anything that might upset the pilot enough to send the whole plane into a tailspin. That seems to be Carter's position vis-à-vis the business community.

The consensus of the business community is like a sieve through which legislation must pass. Tax rebates for consumers didn't make it; tax credits for business, though the President withdrew them as well, probably will. The entire energy program is heading towards that sieve now. It will be instructive to observe the outcome.

Democrats dissatisfied with Carter are remarking that he is the most competent Republican president we've had. Indeed the economic goals the administration has set itself, as distinguished from those the Democratic platform announced, are not that different from Nixon's and Ford's. Its energy program was devised by a Republican technician who served in the last two administrations, and it met with the enthusiastic approval of John Sawhill, former GOP energy chief.

Yet the observation that Carter is "Gerry Ford with brains" is not fair to the extent that it suggests a personal abandonment of his former ideals. Carter is still the engineer more than the businessman. He believes that efficiency will lead to profits rather than the other way round; he believes in a standard for fairness other than what the market decrees. He put energy policy in the hands of someone whose political affiliations were less important than his technical orientation. His administration has absorbed at least one element from the Democratic left, the middle-class consumer and ecology alliance. With his insistence on comprehensiveness and long-range perspectives, he is taking us another major step towards national economic planning, not perhaps of the democratic sort I might welcome but of an intelligent, conservative cast.

All Carter's instincts tell him it is better to move with business rather than against it, and he is apparently willing to make a lot of concessions to that end. Up to a point. With congressional waters full of energy and auto lobbyists circling around his energy program he may soon arrive at that point. What then? My guess —no more than a guess—is that, having forged no movement of Democrats on the left, he will give in. The nation will have economic and social policy strictly on business terms.

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we in the Maritimes would have to follow suit, whether enthusiastically or reluctantly. If Ottawa has shown little use for us to date, one can imagine what our impoverished and colonial status would be were we geographically separated from Upper Canada by another country" (*Confederation and the Maritimes*, Windsor, Nova Scotia, 1976). According to Mr. MacEwan, "Nova Scotia was taken into Confederation entirely as a result of political maneuvering, by statesmen who had no mandate to do any such thing. There was never any plebiscite or referendum until after the fact, when the people rejected Confederation overwhelmingly." In fact the possibility of Maritime separation was voiced in an article published in *MacLean's* in 1936. In view of the Maritime tradition separation would not be unthinkable. Regional identities are strong and well-established, while across the country "Canadian identity" remains an open question. Even the name "Canada" was originally applied to "the Canadas," Upper (Ontario) and Lower (Quebec) until 1867.

In many ways Canada is not a nation and perhaps never will be in the sense that Quebec already is a nation. Indeed, Quebec may well be the only place in the country where "nationalism" makes any sense, or better, is a force to be reckoned with. Mr. Trudeau has charged that the separation of Quebec would be an international tragedy, "a crime against the history of mankind," the tragic failure of a pluralist dream. The French translation of the Prime Minister's words as "un crime contre l'humanité" has already raised some hackles in Quebec, and not only in separatist ranks. Mr. Trudeau's interpretation of the question may assume too much with respect to the relative merits of alternative forms of political organization now that it is possible to argue that small is beautiful. It could be argued that whatever Canada is or will be, it cannot be assimilated simply to the formula of the nation state. The Canadas and the Canadian provinces are happily spared the need to become a superpower. The idea of sovereignty does not carry as much weight today as it did in the eighteenth century, and the decentralization that everyone talks about and most people despair of achieving might better be realized through alternative forms of political organization resulting from the separation of Quebec. Whether in fact separation would be a tragedy might well depend on how the rest of us react to it.

Sir John A. MacDonald forging (or railroading) confederation in 1867, would rather have had a unitary state to guarantee English ascendancy than a confederation; many *Québécois* believe that the confederation that resulted has in fact realized MacDonald's preference. Yet he was forced to accept a confederation rather than a unitary state because of the "French fact." The French fact is still with us.

JORDAN BISHOP

(Jordan Bishop, a regular contributor, teaches at the College of Cape Breton in Nova Scotia.)

THE GARDENER

PAUL PETRIE

And there were the roses, drenching the summer's air
with a thousand shining scents—

And there was the roses'
keeper, stoop-backed, wrinkle-faced, with a gold-toothed smile,
pruning the red-barbed stems, picking off the blossoms
that were overripe and searching the tight-sheathed buds
for aphids, beetles, grubs—

I walked beside,
small shadow on the dew-soaked lawn, while on
he talked—of Buddha, Gandhi, Tolstoy, Jesus
Christ—all the morning prophets of the world—
not understanding much, but understanding
that this was the garden and this the garden's keeper
whose very hands were wise, and running from rose to rose
drinking the fragrant ichors of the sun.

If I say he had a wife who was a scold,
that his children grew up neither rich nor happy,
that he played favorites, worked all his life at McClery's
fixing stoves, and died at last unknown
I speak as a sworn witness, now that those crimson
ears are underground, to what prodigious magic,
drifting through summer mornings, those roses heard.

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CONFRONTING DOROTHY DAY

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

A symposium was held in March at Mercy College in Dobbs Ferry, New York, to honor Dorothy Day. Messages acclaiming her came that day from figures as widely spaced in the American spectrum as Terence Cooke, Michael Harrington and Norman Mailer.

In an interview published that same week Archbishop Jean Jadot, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, when pressed to identify the good or great American Catholics whom he would cite as models, had only been able to name Dorothy Day. "I agree with you," he said to the interviewer, "on the lack of heroes, and of real prophetic figures, in the way Dorothy Day was, and still is."

There was no such acclaim when Dorothy first began her tireless travels around the country talking of her Catholic Worker in the thirties. She had disillusioned many of her former comrades on the left by joining the Church. In the Church itself her welcome was, at best, lukewarm. Many looked on her as a possible Communist infiltrator. There were cities in which no parish hall or Catholic school auditorium was open to her. But her writings spread in the little penny paper and she talked where she could, insisting on the need to take literally the call of the gospel to feed the hungry and harbor the harborless; insisting, moreover, on the need to examine the society which left people homeless, drove farmers from their land, made of workers automatons, and gave no vision to the young.

Those of us who read and heard, and who saw the Worker movement founded with its idea of houses of hospitality for the poor, in body or spirit—forty from coast to coast in a very few years—of farming communes, of communities of workers and scholars, were given an answer to our complaints that the Church did not address the problems of the day. "You are the Church. You can do these things and do them where you are." Some of the young, like myself, who could not completely accept the Worker ideas and the Worker way of living, nevertheless became fellow travelers of the Worker for life. Dorothy was our lodestar. Because of her it was possible to remain faithful to a Church with which we were often at odds. For she was the constant, in season and out of season. Activists and thinkers came to the Worker over the years, stayed awhile and left—some to become editors, politicians, movement leaders, professors, priests, nuns, novelists. But Dorothy remained always, her unique literary gift and her great power of example, its mainstay.

One of those who came, John Cogley, and left to become in turn an editor of *Today*, *Commonweal*, *The New York Times*, and the *Center Magazine*, wrote in his last book of their meeting when he was a young man.

"Dorothy Day was then (1937) about forty and a strikingly attractive woman . . . . She was quietly effective in her constant prodding of young people to achieve greater progress in spiritual development combined with detachment and social concern. . . . Characteristically, she gave all credit for her remarkable accomplishment . . . to Peter Maurin, an itinerant French philosopher . . . a man of genuine Franciscan detachment from worldly goods, extremely humble in manner. He was obviously uncomfortable in the feigned role of leadership. Unless the questions were abstractly philosophical or sweepingly historical, he would turn helplessly to Dorothy Day for an answer. We had no doubt that she was the real leader of the Catholic Worker movement."

If Dorothy was, and is, really the leader of this movement which has served as a prod to our consciences, as the voice crying in our wilderness, her way of leadership may be worth studying. It may say something about the way women might contribute if they had equal responsibility in the world with men. We feminists are fond of saying that women, given the chance, would do things differently. But so far most women who have been leaders on the world scene, from Elizabeth I to Golda Meir and Indira Gandhi, have had to do so in the way of men. Even saintly mother foundresses have been known to fret at the limitations imposed by sex, and to equal men in manipulative expertise.

What does it mean that Dorothy to this day insists that Peter Maurin founded the Worker and led it? And that over the years there have been a succession of men to whom she ascribed leadership and quoted respectfully—men who thus had a far wider hearing than they would otherwise have had? I tend to dispute these Catholic feminists who see in this just another example of the age-old strategy of women who had to achieve their goals through men.

For forty years Dorothy Day has created an audience for what Joseph Cunneen, organizer of the symposium, called the "emphases of the Catholic Worker: the theme of poverty, nonviolence, the problem of power and the powerless, the role of women, the relation between prayer and politics." Many of these themes are among those things about which worldwide decisions are still made by one sex, as Helvi Sipila, highest ranking woman at the United Nations, once said despairingly, "the decisions about

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AUDEN AND W. B. YEATS

EDWARD T. CALLAN

From singing-master to ogre

Did those friends of W. H. Auden who arranged for his memorial in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey think of him as the poet of only one poem, "In Memory of W. B. Yeats," as one might think, for example, of Henley as the poet of "Invictus," or of Gray as the poet of "Elegy in a Country Churchyard"? At the Abbey ceremony in October 1974, John Gielgud read the third movement of "In Memory of W. B. Yeats," beginning with lines that seemed a little inappropriate for the unveiling of Auden's stone:

Earth received an honoured guest,
William Yeats is laid to rest;

and ending with the lines permanently inscribed on the memorial:

In the prison of his days
Teach the free man how to praise.

Would Auden want lines that brought Yeats to mind inscribed on his monument? I believe he would not. In fact I feel certain that should his ghost visit the Poets' Corner the inscription would vex it.

Of course Yeats had been one of Auden's first singing-masters (although perhaps not always quite so fervently invoked as Yeats invoked his sages in "Sailing to Byzantium"):

O sages standing in God's holy fire
As in the gold mosaic of a wall,
Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,
And be the singing-masters of my soul.)

Auden's earlier singing-masters were Thomas Hardy and Robert Frost for whom he says he developed a passion while still at school. Then T. S. Eliot, particularly as the poet of *The Waste Land,* attracted him during his Oxford years. So did Wilfred Owen whose technique of slant-rhyme helped to shape the best of his undergraduate poems. But Yeats, once Auden had discovered his later work, exerted a much more powerful fascination than any of these. This grew in time into a kind of obsession. And when Auden's own changed attitudes caused him to turn full circle—philosophically to "perne in a gyre"—the singing-master became an ogre.

Auden went up to Oxford as a science exhibitioner in 1925. He twice edited *Oxford Poetry*—in 1926 with Charles Plumb and in 1927 with Cecil Day Lewis. Forty years later in a Preface to *C. Day Lewis, the Poet Laureate,* Auden recalled that it was he who introduced Day Lewis to the poetry of Frost and Hardy, and that Day Lewis had introduced him to the later poems of Yeats. He remarked on Hardy's subsequent good influence on Day Lewis, and added: "I wish I could say the same about Yeats's influence on me. Alas, I think it was a bad influence, for which, most unjustly, I find it difficult to forgive him."

A number of Auden's undergraduate poems are quite evidently influenced by Yeats, in tone, rhythm, or rhetoric; but Auden's early debt to Yeats goes deeper than this. It was Yeats who invented a viable modern form for a particular kind of poem—an occasional poem in conversational style—at which Auden was eventually to become a master among poets writing in English. In 1928, Yeats had written, "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory," beginning with the lines:

Now that we're almost settled in our house,
I'll name the friends that cannot sup with us
Beside a fire of turf in th' ancient tower,

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And having talked to some late hour
Climb up the narrow winding stair to bed.

The opening lines of Poem XIII of Auden's *Poems*, 1928, hand-printed by Stephen Spender during the Oxford vacation, show Auden's fascination with this elegy:

Tonight when a full storm surrounds the house
And the fire creaks, the many come to mind,
Sent forward in the thaw with anxious marrow;
For such might now return with a bleak face,
An image pause, half-lighted in the door . . .;

and significantly, when Auden sought, in "Yeats as an Example," to identify Yeats's chief poetic legacy, he credited the Irish poet with transforming the occasional poem in English from an official performance of impersonal virtuosity, like Tennyson's "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington," into a serious reflective poem having at once personal and public interest; and he identified Yeats's elegy for Robert Gregory as the first successful instance of this transformation: "A poem such as 'In Memory of Major Robert Gregory' is something new and important in the history of English poetry. It never loses the personal note of a man speaking about his personal friends in a particular setting—in *Adonais*, for example, both Shelley and Keats disappear as people—and at the same time the occasion and characters acquire a symbolic public significance."

As the thirties wore on, Auden's admiration for Yeats as an occasional poet was tempered by his dislike for Yeats's fondness for the trappings of aristocracy, and his flirtation with General O'Duffy's Irish fascist organization, the Blueshirts. But this was mere distaste for Yeats's foibles. In the second half of his life Auden developed an almost obsessive fear of the danger of Yeats's kind of outlook, and much of the story of Auden's development as a poet after 1940 is also the story of his struggle to exorcise the persistent spirit of Yeats. The stages of his growing disenchantment with Yeats mark the hardening of his conviction that the greatest threats to individual freedom in the modern world were a direct legacy of the Romantic outlook on which Yeats prided himself.

Auden distinguishes two effects of Romanticism on the modern mind. The first is the persistence into the twentieth century of the nineteenth century notion of the Bard: the poet who regarded himself or who was regarded by others as the embodiment of the soul of his nation. Wagner, Whitman and Tennyson represent this nineteenth century notion of the Bard in varying degrees. Kipling is an obvious instance of the notion of the Bard persisting into the twentieth century. So also, with individual differences, are D. H. Lawrence, W. B. Yeats; and of course Auden himself broadcasting on Spanish radio for the Republican Government in 1937, for in an age of ideologies the notion of the Bard persists in the "official spokesman"; and some of these who welcomed Auden's revolutionary zeal in the thirties (not all of them lovers of poetry) may have been merely on the lookout for an effective Bard—a Kipling for the Popular Front. In any event he became acutely conscious of the unmistakable kinship between the cult of the poet as Bard and the cult of the "inspired" national leader—Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin—that threatened the survival of European democracy in the thirties. In the fifth volume of *Poets of the English Language* (1950) Auden warns that to the would-be poet in whom the notion of the Bard persists "the thought of a tyrant who will provide him with a myth of terror, of the prospect of total war as a cult, is not unwelcome." It is in the light of this view of the Bard as bellman for the Leader's dark intuitions that Auden eventually came to see Yeats as one of the Ogre's party. The Ogre thrives on every tendency to seek truth in private revelation. His shadow takes the shape of a giant Aeon—Guardian of the Gnostic way.

Three things in particular mark the successive stages of Auden's disenchantment with Yeats regarded as the high priest of the Gnostic imagination. Two of these are his revisions of "In Memory of W. B. Yeats" and of "September 1, 1939." The third, and most direct repudiation of what Yeats stood for, is the opera, *Elegy for Young Lovers.*

2.

When Yeats died in January, 1939, Auden commemorated his death in two ways. One "The Public *vs.* the Late Mr. William Butler Yeats," was a prose exercise in the two voices of dialectic in which "The Public Prosecutor" and "The Counsel for the Defence" present cases for denying or according to Yeats the title of "great" poet. The other was one of the most justly famous of his own occasional poems, "In Memory of W. B. Yeats." Although its opening has the plangent quality of the poetry of Yeats's old age, this memorial to Yeats is not an overflow of powerful feeling. Speaking to Robert Craft in 1970 about his elegies on Freud and Yeats, Auden said: "These elegies of mine are not poems of grief. Freud I never met, and Yeats I only met casually and didn't particularly like him. Sometimes a man stands for certain things which is quite different from what one feels in personal grief."

The first of the elegy's three movements sets Yeats's death in an allegorical landscape freezing into inactivity:

He disappeared in the dead of winter:

The brooks were frozen, the airports almost
deserted,
And snow disfigured the public statues;
The mercury sank in the mouth of the dying day.

The word *disappeared* in the opening line is a measure of Auden's close reading of Yeats who used this word in *A Vision* as a technical term for death which he

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thought of as "A brief parting from those dear," before reappearing in some new bodily form.

The second movement of the elegy addresses Yeats on shared human frailty:

> You were silly like us; your gift survived it all:
> The parish of rich women, physical decay,
> Yourself. . . .

These lines pass over Yeats's personal shortcomings with just a flicker of recollection. Yet the phrase "the parish of rich women" casts Yeats in the role of the pastor of an admiring flock, and therefore, in the role of Bardic apostle or priest of the imagination. In the prose companion piece the Prosecutor also dwells on aspects of the parish of rich women. He points, for example, to the inconsistency of Yeats's extolling the life of the peasantry while preferring to live in "noble houses, of large drawing-rooms inhabited by the rich and the decorative, most of them of the female sex." The Prosecutor also chides Yeats for his obsession with

the occult, and mocks his failure to outgrow his folly: "In 1900 he believed in fairies; that was bad enough; but in 1930 we are confronted with the pitiful, deplorable spectacle of a grown man occupied with the mumbo-jumbo of magic and the nonsense of India." Elsewhere, speaking in his own voice, Auden deplores Yeats's interest in the occult: "How on earth, we wonder, could a man of Yeats's gifts take such nonsense seriously? I have a further bewilderment, which may be due to my English upbringing, one of snobbery. How *could* Yeats, with his great aesthetic appreciation of aristocracy, ancestral houses, ceremonious tradition. take up something so essentially lower-middle class—or should I say Southern Californian. . . ." Yet neither in his own voice nor the voice of the Prosecutor does Auden name the several women close to Yeats all of whom were in some degree devoted to occult practices or psychic studies. These included, for example, Yeats's wife from whose mediumship he profited in *A Vision,* Lady Gregory who shared his interest in psychical research, and both Maude Gonne and Florence Farr who were fellow members of the Order of the Golden Dawn. But, as we shall see, Auden was less reticent twenty years later in his comments on the origins of the opera *Elegy for Young Lovers* which satirizes Yeats and his entourage.

The second movement of the elegy also addresses Yeats on the limitations of art which can no more moderate the madness of civil or international strife than it can change Irish weather:

> Mad Ireland hurt you in poetry.
> Now Ireland has her madness and her weather
> still,
> For poetry makes nothing happen: it survives
> In the valley of its making where executives
> Would never want to tamper; . . .

The phrase "poetry makes nothing happen" may pain those who wish to cling to the notion of the Bard; yet Auden has bluntly said that no poem of his, or of another, saved even one Jewish victim of the death camps. The context invites the understanding that poetry is not a proper medium for Apostles, and is misused by Bards who think themselves called to an apostolate. Significantly, in his final revision of this poem Auden changed the wording of his statement on poetry from "it survives / In the valley of its saying" to "it survives / In the valley of its making." The substitution of *making* diminishes the expectation of inspired Bardic utterance that *saying* may hint at.

The third movement of the elegy originally contained three quatrains—with Kipling and Paul Claudel as the instances of weakness—on how the passage of time erases the memory of an artist's personal shortcomings. Revised versions omit these quatrains on time possibly because Auden changed his view of Claudel, in particular; or perhaps because they come too close to echoing Shelley's Romantic claim in his *Defense of Poetry* where, in a parody of Scripture, he says that the faults of such illustrious poets of the past as, Homer, Virgil and Spenser, "have been weighed and found to have been dust in the balance; if their sins were as scarlet they are now white as snow; they have been washed in the blood of the mediator and redeemer Time."

Finally, in 1967, Auden changed the first of the repeated resonant lines:

> O all the instruments agree
> The day of his death was a dark cold day . . .

to the more matter of fact understatement, 'What instruments we have agree," and it is this change that best indicates the arena in which Auden wrestled with the spirit of Yeats. The change may seem slight, but anyone familiar with his poetry will recognize the voice of Yeats in the line "O all the instruments agree" (compare "O sages standing in God's holy fire" quoted above), while those familiar with Auden's work will recognize the more matter of fact "What instruments we have agree" as authentically his own. The original line, written in the voice of Yeats, demands declamation. It generates an impulse to get up on a stage, or on a box, or on a boiler. One can imagine it spoken by the Delphic oracle, or by the god, Apollo, himself. But the revised line suggests the voice of a man banished from

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Eden. Earlier changes in "In Memory of W. B. Yeats" came from dissatisfaction with the poem; but this one, by muting the Yeatsian resonance and typical staginess that Auden referred to among friends as "walking in high heels," indicates disenchantment with the spirit of Yeats. The main battleground for this struggle, however, was not the elegy on Yeats, but the even more popular poem of the same period "September 1, 1939."

3.

In October 1939 the *New Republic* printed a poem of Auden's which took its title from the date on which Hitler's armies attacked Poland at the start of the Second World War. This poem, "September 1, 1939," was modeled quite closely on Yeats's "Easter 1916." It soon became a favorite anthology piece at least in America where it was much in demand at poetry readings. But Auden soon began to revise it. He first altered the final line of the eighth stanza from "We must love one another or die" to "We must love one another and die." Still dissatisfied, he excised the whole stanza. Eventually he discarded the poem altogether. He was frequently asked to explain both his revisions and his rejection of the poem, and he felt it necessary to tell the whole story in his Foreword to B. C. Bloomfield's bibliography: "Rereading a poem of mine, '1st September, 1939,' after it had been published, I came to the line 'We must love one another or die,' and said to myself: 'That's a damned lie! We must die anyway.' So, in the next edition, I altered it to, "We must love one another and die.' This didn't seem to do either, so I cut the stanza. Still no good, the whole poem, I realized, was infected with an incurable dishonesty and must be scrapped."

The simple explanation for Auden's attitude to "September 1, 1939" was his conviction that if his poems were to be *authentic,* the tone of voice must be unmistakably his own. He defines an authentic poem as one that convinces the reader that the poet has seen its visions of truth with his own eyes, and not through someone else's spectacles. Expanding on this idea he says that every poet in reading other poets, "has to distinguish between their merits, which may be very great, and their influence upon himself which may be very pernicious. It was not the fault of Yeats and Rilke that I allowed myself to be seduced by them into writing poems which were false to my personal and poetic nature." Auden also says that he finds in much "serious" poetry an element of theater, "of exaggerated gesture and fuss, of indifference to the naked truth" that revolts him. Yeats is, no doubt, one of those whose too theatrical gestures he finds to have influenced "September 1, 1939."

But Auden's disenchantment with Yeats ultimately went deeper than his dislike for exaggerated fuss and staginess. It went deeper also than the political differences that divided them in the thirties. Auden's distrust of the imaginative Romantic genius who makes an infallible dogma of his own intuitions—a quality akin to the self-deification of intuitive Führers like Hitler—extended to what he called Yeats's "determinist and 'musical' view of history" as it did to the theories of D. H. Lawrence which had also influenced his own early works particularly *The Orators.* At least in Auden's view Yeats and Lawrence, imbued with the notion of the Bard, made infallible dogma of their own intuitions quite as readily as Marx or Hitler. He says, "works like *A Fantasia of the Unconscious* or Yeats's *A Vision* are not humble attempts at private myths, but are designed as the new and only science." And reviewing Yeats's posthumous volume *Last Poems and Plays* in June, 1940, he faulted Yeats most of all for "his utter lack of effort to relate his esthetic *Weltanschauung* with that of science, a hostile neglect which was due, in part at least, to the age in which he was born when science was avidly mechanistic. . . ." Both statements confirm that Auden found Yeats's Gnostic outlook deplorable.

4.

In his later career Auden's preoccupation with Yeats tended to increase rather than diminish. In *Elegy for Young Lovers* (1960), he created the character Gregor Mittenhofer to embody, in caricature, the nineteenth century notion of the Bard. It was Yeats who provided the chief model for Mittenhofer, as Lady Gregory provided the model for Mittenhofer's devoted admirer and unpaid secretary, the aristocratic Carolina, Grafin von Kirchstetten. Other characters in the opera were given qualities in common with Mrs. Yeats and with Yeats's friend and physician, Dr. Oliver Gogarty.

Cyril Connolly reviewing *Dublin Portraits* by W. R. Rogers quotes a remark of Austin Clarke's (which he mistakenly attributes to Frank O'Connor): "As far as the younger generation of poets are concerned here in Ireland, Yeats was rather like an enormous oak-tree which, of course, kept us in the shade. We always hoped we would reach the sun, but the shadow of the great oak-tree is still there." Connolly suggests that this remark of Clarke's gave Auden the idea of creating Mittenhofer: "this, and some anecdotes of Yeats's life at Coole," says Connolly, "formed, I believe, the genesis of Auden's opera *Elegy for Young Lovers.*"

Auden himself gives two accounts of the genesis of *Elegy for Young Lovers.* The first, "Genesis of a Libretto," which is signed by both Auden and his collaborator, Kallman, tells us that the composer, Henze, wanted a chamber opera for a small cast and no chorus. To the librettists this seemed to call for "five or six persons, each of whom suffered from a different obsession." They first thought of a character obsessed with

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the past like Miss Havisham in Dickens's *Great Expectations*—an idea which survived in Hilda Mack, the old lady whose visions supply Mittenhofer with matter for his poems as Mrs. Yeats's automatic writing supposedly supplied Yeats with matter for *A Vision*. For a variety of attitudes and operatic voices, they decided also on a boy, a girl and a doctor. Their first idea for a central character, with a suitably Romantic obsession, was an actor whose supreme ambition was to play the lead in Byron's *Manfred*. But on asking themselves "What kind of person can dominate an opera both dramatically and vocally?" and "What kind of mature man can be intimately and simultaneously involved with a young girl and a mad old lady?" they decided the answer was "the artist-genius of the nineteenth and early twentieth century,"—which is to say the poet as Bard. They go on to claim that this idea of the artist-genius is a genuine myth "because the lack of identity between Goodness and Beauty, between the character of a man and the character of his creations, is a permanent aspect of the human condition." And they add:

> The theme of *Elegy for Young Lovers* is summed up in two lines by Yeats:
>
> The intellect of man is forced to choose
> Perfection of the life or of the work.
>
> Aesthetically speaking, the personal existence of the artist is accidental; the essential thing is his production. The artist-genius as the nineteenth century conceived him, made this aesthetic presupposition an ethical absolute, that is to say he claimed to represent the highest, most authentic mode of existence.

The librettists say they chose Vienna as the setting because the myth of the artist-genius was a European myth at the time when Paris and Vienna were the centers of European culture; and having coyly warned us not to think of Mittenhofer's outrageous behavior an Austrian characteristic, they say "As a matter of fact, the only things about him which were suggested by historical incidents were drawn from the life of a poet—no matter whom—who wrote in English."

Yeats's life supplied most of this, but some identifiable material from Auden's own experience as a poet is also used to flesh out Mittenhofer. For example, Mittenhofer berates his aristocratic patron and devoted secretary, Carolina, Grafin von Kirchstetten, for mistyping the word *poets* in his draft of verses as *ports*. Such a transposition had actually occurred in the case of Auden's "Journey to Iceland," where the opening lines appear as:

> And the traveller hopes: 'Let me be far from any
> Physician'; and the ports have names for the sea.

In a letter to Christopher Isherwood printed with this poem in *Letters From Iceland*, Auden, unlike Mittenhofer, accepted the change and said: "No, you were wrong. I did not write 'the *ports* have names for the sea' but 'the *poets* have names for the sea.' However, as so often before, the mistake seems better than the original idea, so I'll leave it."

"Genesis of a Libretto" does not directly name Yeats as the model for Mittenhofer, but Auden's T. S. Eliot Memorial Lecture, "The World of Opera," in *Secondary Worlds* comes very close to doing so. Speaking of the Miss Havisham character, Frau Hilda Mack, Auden says: "Remembering that Yeats had a wife from whose mediumistic gifts he profited, it seemed plausible that Mittenhofer should have discovered Frau Mack and made it his habit to visit her from time to time, bringing his entourage with him."

From so direct a revelation of "historical incidents drawn from the life of a poet—no matter whom," it seems safe to conclude with Cyril Connolly that anecdotes about Yeats's life at Coole Park supplied the character Carolina, Grafin von Kirchstetten, who corresponds to Lady Gregory; and also to conclude that a second

character, Mittenhofer's personal physician, Dr. Wilhelm Reischmann, who keeps Mittenhofer "in good health and youthful vigour with medicines and hormone injections," corresponds to Dr. Oliver Gogarty, Yeats's physician, who first suggested to him the Steinach procedure for rejuvenation.

To return briefly to the claim made by Auden in the quotation above, that *Elegy for Young Lovers* embodies a universal myth of the artist-genius, it is obvious that the language in the quotation assumes wide acceptance of Kierkegaard's categories, the Aesthetic, Ethical and Religious, as themselves universal. (This claim, fundamental to Auden's outlook, marks him as author-in-chief of "Genesis of a Libretto," and not Kallman who found Kierkegaard's ideas uncongenial.) The immediate points made in the quotation are two. The first is that there is a dialectical tension between the Aesthetic and the Ethical modes as Yeats had recognized in his lines:

> The intellect of man is forced to choose
> Perfection of the life or of the work.

The second point—aptly illustrated by the quotation from Shelley's *Defence* earlier in this essay—is that when the Aesthetic mode takes itself too seriously and refuses

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to be content to play, it mistakenly presumes not that its sphere is the ethical, but that it is, in fact, the Religious in Kierkegaard's scheme; which is to say that where the notion of the Bard persists, the public, like the "list'ning crowd" in Dryden's "Alexander's Feast," shout "A present deity," and the artist himself,

Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

The relative proneness of Auden and Yeats to this temptation may perhaps be gauged by their attitudes towards biographies of poets. Auden, who envied Shakespeare his luck, or good judgment, in leaving behind little that biographers could use, felt that, ideally, poets should be as anonymous as the builders of the pyramids. Yeats, on the other hand, declared: "A poet is by the very nature of things a man who lives with entire sincerity . . . his life is an experiment in living and those who come after him have the right to know it."

To Auden, the most dangerous legacy of Romanticism was the tendency to confuse the artist, the custodian of beauty, with the apostle, the custodian of truth. And it is no doubt his anxiety to proclaim this danger, not personal animosity towards Yeats, that led to the invention of Mittenhofer who so confuses the Aesthetic and Ethical—the spheres of beauty and truth—that he contrives the actual death of two young lovers to provide matter for his elegy.

Auden's quarrel with Yeats's aestheticism reflects his more fundamental quarrel with the Platonism that lay at the heart of the Romantic sensibility. One of his more ambitious undertakings—that has perhaps gone unrecognized among those he had hoped would find his views congenial—was an effort to formulate a Christian theory of art that would replace Greek aesthetics. His first podium for this was the weekly column he wrote for *Commonweal* during November and December of 1942. He called this column "Lecture Notes"—an allusion, no doubt, to that other famous reply to Plato: Aristotle's *Poetics;* and he signed it "Didymus" possibly to represent the tension between faith and reason in the Apostle Thomas who was called Didymus; and also to represent a Kierkegaardian double focus, or dialectic, running counter to the singleminded Romantics whom he had dubbed "the either-ors, the mongrel halves / Who find truth in a mirror" in *New Year Letter* the year before. (The first title of that work, *The Double Man,* was intended to convey the same significance as "Didymus".)

Auden began his second column (November 13, 1942): "As a writer, who is also a would-be Christian, I cannot help feeling that a satisfactory theory of Art from the standpoint of the Christian faith has yet to be worked out. With the exception of Kierkegaard, most theologians . . . have accepted Greek aesthetics too uncritically." Then, having distinguished three religious standpoints, "Natural, Revealed, and Christian," he sought to color the second of these Gnostic: "The second believes that the Unconditional is, objectively, perpetually *absconditus,* but occasionally subjectively manifest to exceptional groups or individuals. . . ." By contrast, the third "believes that the Unconditional was objectively manifested upon one unique occasion (The Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us). . . ." Auden developed these ideas in the long dramatic works, *The Sea and the Mirror* and *For the Time Being: A Christmas Oratorio,* where Simeon puts the case for a Christian aesthetic: 'Because in Him the Flesh is united to the Word without magical transformation, Imagination is redeemed from promiscuous fornication with her own images." In so refuting the Gnostic way, Auden may have had in mind the imaginary world of Yeats's *A Vision*—privately revealed through the instrumentality of his own fictional creations, Hanrahan (with "all his mighty memories"), Aherne and Robartes; and also through the instrumentality of his wife's mediumship.

Auden's fascination with Yeats never really ended. He would probably agree that Austin Clarke's observation on the plight of Irish poets shadowed by Yeats, the great oak-tree, could equally well apply to all poets writing in English. Auden was pleased with the oak-tree's shade until its shadow assumed a sinister shape:

'O what was that bird,' said horror to hearer,
'Did you see that shape in the twisted trees?
Behind you swiftly the figure comes softly, . . .

Ironically, because of the lines inscribed on his memorial in the Poets' Corner of Westminister Abbey—that national mausoleum for English Bards— Auden does not escape the shadow of the great Celtic oak-tree even in death. Furthermore, English reviewers of the recent edition of Auden's *Collected Poems* continue to deplore his revision of the line "O all the instruments agree," which, says the *Times Literary Supplement,* "at least sounded musical." Perhaps all the instruments we have agree on one thing: that the Gnostic imagination that finds truth in a mirror is unperturbed, and the Ogre's citadel unshaken.

AN APPEAL—A Dutch missioner in landlocked Zambia, East Africa, is working with 40 families on a five-year program to set up family farms near Lusaka. Market-gardening plots will comprise two acres per family. Most of the money contributed so far (from a Canadian justice and peace organization and a Belgian funding agency) has been spent "to construct a bore hole for water." This cooperative project "coincides with the concept of Zambian humanism which stresses self-reliance and the dignity of the individual." If successful, the plan will spread. Gifts for Father Hinfelaar's project should be sent to: The White Fathers of Africa, 1624 21st St., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20009.

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ANNE SEXTON AND GOD

WILLIAM J. McGILL

Preeminently a confessional poet

On October 5, 1974, the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Anne Sexton was found dead inside an idling car parked in her garage. The coroner in Weston, Massachusetts, ruled her death a suicide. Those who knew her work, which includes some of the most emotionally challenging poetry of our time, were stunned—but not surprised.

Anne Sexton had forged her art out of anguish, breakdown and a preoccupation with death. Her poetic expression was indeed powerful, but it was a power we equate with the dark night of the soul. Her vision shuddered with gloomy forebodings and morbid longings; her world had in it more shadowy valleys than sunlit highlands. Her first poems, published under the title *To Bedlam and Part Way Back,* emerged directly, raw and passionate, from her confinement in a mental institution and the threat of a regression into mental depression, back within those walls, which hung enticingly over her life. Bouts with alcohol, dependence on tranquilizers, the unresolved anxieties of her childhood, all compounded that aching fear.

Preeminently a confessional poet, Anne Sexton laid bare in her writings her struggles with a suicidal compulsion, struggles which were essentially visceral. In irony or blunt truth she wrote "Jonah made his living / inside the belly. / Mine comes from the exact same place." ("Making a Living," *Death Notebooks,* p. 3.) The confessional nature of her art means that, like Augustine, she roamed the fields and palaces of memory: "With this pen I take in hand my selves/and with these dead disciples I will grapple." ("Mother and Jack and the Rain," *Live or Die,* p. 18.) From those grapplings she hoped to recover a clearer sense of who she was, at least a happier vision of who she might be, and to recall a time "When we were young and did not look/into the abyss/that God spot." ("The Fury of Sundays," *Death Notebooks,* p. 48.) But she never experienced a moment when anxiety for her past life faded away: reaching for the blossoms of memory, she was repeatedly stung.

To be sure, there were better moments. The collection *Live or Die,* for which she received a Pulitzer Prize, detailed chronologically her response to an imperative she had encountered in an early draft of Saul Bellow's *Herzog*: "With one long breath, caught and held in his chest, he fought his sadness over his solitary life. Don't cry, you idiot! Live or die, but don't poison everything. . ." She herself described those poems as reading "like a fever chart for a bad case of melancholy," yet she ended hopefully: "I say *Live, Live* because of the sun,/the dream, the excitable gift." ("Live," p. 90.)

Apparently by late 1974 she feared that she was poisoning everything. Her marriage had failed. The pain of writing had sharpened. The mental depression which had almost overwhelmed her previously but which she had driven away with the cries of her art now swirled close once more. When her friend and fellow poet Sylvia Plath commited suicide in 1963, Anne Sexton had written ". . . What did you stand by,/just how did you lie down into?/Thief!—/how did you crawl into,/crawl down alone/into the death I wanted so badly and for so long. . . ." ("Sylvia's Death," *Live or Die,* p. 38.) And ". . . What is your death/but an old belonging,/a mole that fell out/of one of your poems?" (p. 40.) Now she followed, she fulfilled her own belonging.

Yet amidst this pain, depression, death, another theme haunts Anne Sexton's poetry. A theme touched to be sure with the same anguish that colored her preoccupation with death, but touched also with a yearning hope, a hope which found expression in the collection *The Awful Rowing Toward God* published after her death. That collection begins with a poem entitled "Rowing":

> and God was there like an island I had not rowed to,
> still ignorant of Him, my arms and my legs worked,
> and I grew, I grew,
> I wore rubies and bought tomatoes
> and now, in my middle age,
> about nineteen in the head I'd say
> I am rowing, I am rowing

In this vision echoes the intense desire for God which characterizes some of the great religious literature of all ages. Religion, conceived as man's quest for God, again and again has found expression in images and visions like those of Anne Sexton. And if her in-

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vocation of that vision appears most vividly in this posthumous collection, it nonetheless resonates throughout her work, for her poetry is fundamentally religious. Her imagery is sometimes Biblical, and sometimes blasphemous, but chorus-like her preoccupation with the God question emerges.

But if there was that yearning, that seeking, why was there the despair? Was it that the island was too far away? Did the effort exhaust her so that she could not continue? No, she despaired because she reached her island and it was empty! The fear that it would be so had permeated the poems of the *Death Notebooks*. "I went to the opera and God was not there/ . . . . I went to the galleries and God was not there/ . . . . I went to the bookstore and God was not there." ("Faustus and I," p. 7.) "One day He/ tipped His top hat/ and walked/ out of the room/ ending the argument." ("The Fury of God's Goodbye," p. 46.) ". . . God it seems,/ has turned his backside to us,/ giving us the dark negative . . ." ("God's Backside," p. 58.) These allusions echo another common theme of religious literature and imply the futility of the search.

She had not thought it would be easy:
but I am rowing, I am rowing,
though the wind pushes me back
and I know that that island will not be perfect,
it will have the flaws of life . . .

Yet how does one deal with the uncertainty, the sense of futility that rises?

By psychoanalysis? "But you, my doctor, my enthusiast,/ were better than Christ;/ you promised me another world/ to tell me who/ I was." ("Flee on Your Donkey," *Live or Die*, p. 6.) The promise remained unfulfilled.

By drugs? "The pills are a mother, but better,/ every color and as good as sour balls./ I'm on a diet, from death." ("The Addict," *Live or Die*, p. 85.) The diet failed.

By piety?

Alleluia they sing.
They don't know.
They don't care if he was hiding or flying.
Well, it doesn't matter how he got there.
The important thing for me
is that I'm wearing white gloves.
I always sit straight.
I keep on looking at the ceiling.
And about Jesus,
they couldn't be sure of it,
not so sure of it anyhow,
so they decided to become Protestants.
Those are the people that sing
when they aren't quite
sure.

("Protestant Easter," *Live or Die*, p.43.)

She sang vigorously and the silence overwhelmed her.

She struggled "though the oarlocks stick and are rusty" and she dared to hope. "Today life opened inside me like an egg/ and there inside/ after considerable digging/ I found the answer." ("Live," *Live or Die*, p. 88.) "After the death/ after the black of black,/ this lightness—/not to die, not to die—/that God begat." ("The Fury of Sunrises," *Death Notebook*, p. 51.) And of course "I'm mooring my rowboat/ at the dock of the island called God." ("The Rowing Endeth," *The Awful Rowing Toward God*, p. 85.) But the island was empty, just as she had feared.

In *The Way of All the Earth* John Dunne recounts what he calls the "Parable of the Mountain." In it he describes man climbing a mountain at the top of which, he thinks, is God. By climbing the mountain, by reaching God, man anticipates that he will leave behind, in the valley from which he has begun, all the cares and miseries of life. But while he climbs God is coming down the mountain, down into the valley, down amidst the toil and grief. And in the mists of the mountain God and man pass one another. When man reaches the mountain top he will find nothing: God is not there. What then will he do? He knows the climbing was a mistake, but will he in the agony of that recognition fall down in despair and in the cold and vacant night weep? Or will he turn to retrace his path, through the mists, into the valley, to where God has gone seeking him?

Where God has gone seeking him! In the Gospels, in the New Testament, at the very core of the Judeo-Christian tradition glows the conviction that religion is not simply man's quest for God, but is God's search for man. The whole idea of the Chosen People arises from that conviction: not that the Jews by some special piety or accomplishments had raised themselves up among other peoples to place of eminence, but that, in spite of their frailties, in spite of their turnings away, God had reached out and touched them. And that conception lies at the heart of Christianity as well, at the core of the vision of the *ecclesia*, those who have been called out, the pilgrim people: not that Christians have raised themselves by some special piety or accomplishments, by the attainment of some special knowledge, but that in spite of all God has touched them.

Perhaps the favorite Christian image of God's search for man is that of the Good Shepherd. Compare that with the image evoked in *The Awful Rowing Toward God*: the Shepherd and the island. The Shepherd seeks out his sheep where they have gone astray. He goes down into the shadowy valley, into the thickets of life, to find them. He calls to them. But there is always the danger that frightened and confused, the sheep will drown out his call with their thrashings and bleatings. In the Gospel according to St. Mark we read how, when Jesus and his disciples crossed the

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Sea of Galilee, they were beset by a great storm. Jesus calmed the wind and then chided his disciples "Why are you so frightened? How is it you have no faith?" (4:40) Possessed by fear they could not remember clearly what he had said to them and done for them. They could not remember, they could not hear, not because of the wind, but because of the clanking of the chains of their own mortality, because fear engulfed them, isolating them from one another and from Jesus. Being alone is drowning and, as Anne Sexton knew, "There is no news in fear/but in the end it's fear/that drowns you." ("Imitations of Drowning," *Live or Die*, p. 17.)

In a better moment she knew something else: "Look to your heart/that flutters in and out like a moth./God is not indifferent to your need./You have a thousand prayers/but God has one." ("Not So. Not So.", *The Awful Rowing Toward God*, p. 84.) But that insight failed her. She moored her boat at the island she thought was God. Her heart did flutter like a moth, she prattled out her prayer, thrashing and bleating. Laughed even. Then heard the utter silence of the empty island, and fearful, drowned, hopeless, died.

LOVE'S LABOR'S LOST

THE SCREEN

Woody Allen wants to break our hearts. After a long string of comedies of less and less consequence, he turned up last time in (what was billed as) a serious dramatic film, *The Front*. Actually, all his presence did was make a serious dramatic subject into another comedy. But now, in his new film, he really does come close to turning the tables. He makes a comedy work as a drama. He manages to be, for a change, not quite so inconsequential. You know that something is up just from the title of this new film, *Annie Hall*. That's a name for a serious person, not a dumb movie like *Bananas* or *What's Up Tiger Lily?* It makes you think this is a movie about a labor organizer in the 1930s who became disillusioned when she got lynched.

Annie Hall isn't that serious, but it is more serious than usual for a Woody Allen movie. One of the ways you can tell this is that Diane Keaton, in the title role, actually gets to be funny. When Woody Allen lets somebody besides him get a laugh in the film he's directing, that's serious. It has to be. Any time there are two interesting characters instead of just one, no matter how funny they are, what you're going to get, basically, is a dialogue, and dialogue, unlike a stand-up monologue, is a dramatic art form. *Annie Hall* is serious because it's about a relationship instead of a monomania —a doomed relationship between a very successful comedian and a young woman he helps, sort of, to stardom. Sound familiar? All Allen's films are based on his own personality, of course, and in that sense all are autobiographical. But this one goes further: it is actually based on Woody Allen's life, complete with two marriages and, most recently, Diane Keaton. The irony is that the film should cede so much of the stage to Ms. Keaton. Making now a movie really about himself, Allen manages for once to get outside himself.

But that's not really fair either. Woody Allen is always outside himself. He's so irreconciliably outside himself that he is by nature a parody of the alienation of us all. That's what makes him funny. He's someone alienated not just from society or politics or even other people, but alienated from himself. *Annie Hall* begins with Allen addressing the camera, monologue-style, and telling two old jokes, one of which is the Groucho Marx gag about not wanting to "belong to any club that would have me as a member." The point of that joke, the iron fist barely concealed within its velvet-glove funniness, is that it is oneself who is being rejected rather than the club. Allen returns to the joke a couple of times later in the film, too, as if it were the tagline for his whole life—the touchstone against which all his experiences must be proven, or rather, disproven.

The auto-critique is always implicit. The game on whose sidelines Allen sits is always the one in which he is playing. Indeed, one rather quiet scene in which he and Keaton literally sit on a sideline is in a way the crux of the whole film. The scene is set by the Boat Basin in Central Park, where one of New York's most curiously populated promenades is located. All that happens is that assorted characters walk past and Allen makes scathing, generally hilarious comments on them to Keaton. When a pudgy little dandy in a Panama hat goes by, Allen awards him first prize in a "Truman-Capote look-alike contest." This scene stands out because we realize that, while Allen always works, as here, by a kind of sly ridicule, the contest he's running is usually for a Woody Allen look-alike, and he usually awards the first prize to himself. Maybe this is also why, funny as the scene is, it has its melancholy side as well. Despite being in the middle of a comedy, it strikes us peculiarly as a bit of comedy relief—more comedy for us, maybe, but at last a few moments relief for Woody.

Neither here nor elsewhere, however, does the melancholy get the upper hand. It remains a suggestion made in passing, a mere hint Allen is dropping about himself, which is its effectiveness. The reason it remains thus is also to be found in the scene by the Boat Basin. The impromptu quality of the scene—the promenaders seem to have been shot with a candid camera so Allen could shoot them with his mouth—is very much in the

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spirit of the rest of the film. Several scenes look as if they were just improvised, especially one in which he chases live lobsters all over a kitchen while Ms. Keaton takes his picture, and the film generally hops around in Allen's life from past to present in a way that looks unplanned and spontaneous. The off-hand manner in which Allen makes these observations on his life is what keeps them from becoming maudlin.

Done as a straight narrative, a distressing childhood, two unsuccessful marriages, a spoiled love affair and relentless sexual frustration would have been a pretty grim tale. But broken up as it is here into vignettes, it breaks us up as well. Yet the underlying pain does remain. We sense all along how close to the quick of Allen's real life the film stays. He and Diane Keaton are such winsome people, we can't help feeling at the end what a genuine shame it is that things didn't work out for them.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

DEAD WRITERS: A PARABLE

SAUL MALOFF

Eerie, outlandish, both these; but more than either it is absurd, an offense against nature and nature's design. A sheep at my window? Anyway I think it's a sheep, it looks so like pictures I've seen in books I've read to my children. What is it doing there, outside my workroom window? As soon see penguins in Barbados, a writer in God's house. Yet as startled at my desk I sense a presence and look up, it looks back at me: blank, inscrutably dumb, unexpectedly moon-faced, oddly endearing—looking as if it had never known, would never know, tragedy. The thick matted wool is a dead giveaway; it must be a sheep, nothing else could be that woolly, and I know for a certainty that's where wool comes from: sheep. I read it somewhere. Then I recall a near neighbor is said by the oldtimers to raise the creatures. He is called a farmer and he's not the only one in these parts. Up the road, cows graze. They're black and white mostly. As I walk by on my daily rounds, they undulate to the fence, some of them, and stare at me interminably but without interest. The duration of the stare, one would think, implies some measure of interest: one stares because one is interested. Otherwise one would not stare, as any number of critics have pointed out. Not cows; the rule doesn't apply to them. That's how I know they're cows. Moreover, I have no reason to believe they're not cows. They mean me no active harm, I think. Down the road, the pigs are swinishly indifferent; and so are the ducks and goats and horses and, by and large, the donkeys. It is simply not true that nature is red in tooth and claw. The point about nature, as Hardy and others sensed, is that it doesn't care very deeply about us.

I live in the country, under a hundred miles from New York City but very much the country. Farms and farmers, true country men and women of the soil bred; also rich squires and amateur gardeners, city people, essentially "weekenders" though they live here daily the year round, the distinction being a state of mind. When I departed the city eight years ago, a friend, a writer who had several years earlier moved to Duluth or Des Moines or Dayton, though it may simply have been Denver, for reasons he never adequately explained, though not for want of trying—this writer-friend made a strong, emotional appeal to me to reconsider. Leave, he said, and you're dead. This surprised me. Extending my life in the pure air was my motive, I argued fatuously. Besides, I had heard that country had much to recommend it. Dead as a *writer*, he said; you'll be a dead writer. You can write *The Sound and the Fury* and *Light in August* in one year, but after a year's silence, two at the most, you're dead. Look at me, and tremble.

His story was a strange one; being a writer, though dead, he told it with extraordinary skill and gusto, qualities for which he'd been noted in his day. Before going West he had in fact published two novels in a single calendar year, one new, the other not-so-new. (Actually there was a third—a pseudonymous "paperback original"; but at the time only he and I and his agent knew of it.) The critics had cleared their throats, nodded limply, muttered an admonition: *two* books in a year? In the remote West which he had never really accounted for he undertook the Big Book; in his own words a "long complex dynastic novel covering four possibly five generations," all there in his head throbbing to be written. All he needed was *time;* now he had it—a foundation grant, an almost certain extension of it, to be followed by another grant from another foundation. And the wide westering spaces away from the tumult, moral chaos, vendettas, dreck, craziness, ex-wives. He swore he wouldn't even return for a visit until, big book in both arms, he returned, as he said, to "plant my flag."

After the first year or two letters

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from friends, which had dwindled steadily, came to a virtual halt; even the Christmas cards fell off, along with invitations to lecture, read, participate in symposia, panels, the lesser talk shows, teach creative writing. He was bitterly amused, being thus confirmed in what he had always known of the world's ways; and, in the world's teeth, went on writing, generation after generation, reaching into second and third cousinships, drawing on distant relatives whom he'd never known save in the imagination where they whirled and pulsed. Blocked temporarily at what felt like the mid-point he took a few days off to catch up with old friends and acquaintances via the mails—and was interested to learn that not a few had heard he had died: behind a wheel, on the tennis court, "after a long illness," in bed, in a rock-climbing accident, jogging, by his own hand, by another's hand. Let's have lunch, some older friends wrote. Or drinks. Or dinner. Next time you're in town. Let's hear from you, one said, so we'll know you're alive. Christ, you gave me a real scare there for a minute—you know, our generation *is* starting to drop off like flies. I don't even look at the obit page any more. (I myself learned he was still alive when he wrote to tell me so. Being a writer once known for his gift for comic turns, he made a great joke of it. I forget what it was but I remember smiling at the time.) Do you want to know why I'm here? my friend asked, returning us to the chill present. I'll tell you why. Not for business—I have none; not for pleasure—what pleasure? No. To have lunch, drinks, dinner, attend publishers' cocktail parties—to walk the streets and be seen. I want merely to establish my existence as palpable fact. A remarkable statement, I thought—he hadn't entirely lost his once-noted gift for aphorism and coming close to if not actually touching the enflamed tendon of motive (his phrase). He was wearing a patchwork ski-outfit, I think it was, and sporting a ten-gallon hat; but he had always been a stylist. Later I heard that, having been seen, he had gone back to the deep westerly silence (his phrase).

Nevertheless I moved to the country, a cottage or chalet (the realtor admitted it had evolved over the years, "improved" by a succession of occupants, all of them, by wild coincidence, writers, into an uneasy cross between the two styles) set atop a ridge miles from the village center amid lovely, dark, deep woods (my phrase).

Then, one day, perhaps two or three years after I last saw him, some tearsheets arrived in the mails—some reviews he had done, "posthumously," as a number of people first supposed. Surprising, a little, as he'd always spoken scornfully of the (his word) genre as a "low and sullen craft." Soon not a week passed that was entirely free of tearsheets—one day scrawled atop one of them an invitation to "have lunch" and a New York City phone number. We had lunch (cucumber sandwiches and choice of Postum or Ovaltine) at his sub-leased studio on 42nd Street just west of the 17th Parallel in a fetid building perched amid porn-movie houses and garish arcades. He had returned to the fleshpots, he said, for the contrasting perspective, the better to see the "deep structure" and feel the "mythic rhythm" of the Big Book which was not so much languishing as it had been set aside, for the time being. In the meantime he was making do with reviews and such, lots of them, all over the place. Not wholly depraved work, he said, providing you never forgot what you really are; and there was something to be said for being back, seeing old friends, letting them know (he said with a smile, a wistful one, I thought) you're alive. Lunch, drinks, dinner, publishers' cocktails: he smirked without conviction. The leasee of the westering house was prepared to leave on a week's notice.

When he asked how my book was going, I asked for another cup of Postum. Big? he asked. Middling, I said. Build it, he said. Build it. Take precious care of the form, the rest will look after itself. It's the deep structure that counts. Let's hear from you, he said jovially in parting. Christ I never hear from you. Let a guy know you're alive.

The flood of tearsheets continued, though I no longer acknowledged receipt of them. Each shoddy sentence, sign of haste, lapse of taste, flaw of judgment gave me (I could not help self-confessing) a certain nasty satisfaction. Meanwhile, each day I took precious care of the form under the watchful eye of some beast of the field or other. He was publishing unrevised first drafts (reading, not books, but dust-jackets); I was attending and attending to deep structure.

Manhattan, an island entire in itself, guarded by fierce heraldic beasts engorged with the blood of writers, stood a continent away astride the broad Aegean. Out of spite or madness I cut my remaining ties by canceling subscriptions to all periodicals and shut my ears to echoes and rumors from the Rialto. During this deep slumber, my friend's career swelled like a mushroom in the stygian darkness. To spare me pain, and himself the wrath of enemies, he'd hidden his light beneath a bushel. Now, tormented by my unceasing demands, he unpacked his heart of the whole unvarnished tale, pledging me to secrecy, which I am finally at liberty to reveal.

Inadvertently he became a critic—"behind my own back," he said at first, "with my left hand," "absentmindedly." His agent, a powerful, ribald lady with some big moneymakers in her stable, knowing the trouble he was having with his work-in-progress and weary of hearing about it, dropped the suggestion, though at the time she didn't know she was making one. Take a vacation, she said. Walk the Maine Woods, shoot the rapids somewhere, hunt squirrel, get a new girl, try a boy—and reminded him of Oscar Wilde's celebrated quip. Then added scoffingly: Do some reviews; and finally: Get off my back.

He broke with her. It wasn't the crack about the boy or her back that did it: slanging each other was the form their mutual loathing, a widely-practiced form of literary friendship,

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had always taken. It was the idea of *reviewing*—he, a novelist big with the big book. While swallowing his venom, he happened to run into an old enemy, a failed novelist and now the literary editor of a dubious periodical; and as the two of them were dawdling over a tense drink, the idea came up again, his companion's spite, revenge against a world, embodied in my friend, which for seventeen years had persisted in asking him how the "new book" was coming along. Out of malice he accepted an assignment, a second novel by a young (woman) writer who had made a volcanic debut. Alone, the solitary sweet voice in a nest of jackdaws, he praised it; but so finely and elliptically, with such sly sophistry, did he argue the (bogus) case that instead of looking foolish in the eyes of his adversaries, he made the lot of them more than a little jittery. Naturally, passages of his review were emblazoned in a a surprisingly large advertising campaign (along with another from Kansas City or Topeka); the book did unexpectedly well in hard cover and swept the field in soft. Requests for dust-jacket endorsements trickled in from the publishers (along with several invitations to lunch, including, of course, one to her publisher's cocktail party in honor of the young woman, who turned out to be not better but more *interesting* looking than her photograph. Their whirlwind affair, unfortunately, came to nothing, for reasons too well-known to need retelling. The version one hears nowadays, lasciviously elaborated at Elaine's and the Italian Pavillion, the Hamptons and Litchfield County, is simply not true, as I happen to know.

That was his first review; his second, of course, was the one that led to treatment for "bruises, abrasions, lacerations and severe, disabling emotional damage," in his lawyer's language on the occasion of his suit for damages (abundantly awarded). Everyone knows the essence of the story (though only two or three of us know its deep background); for the young I re-sketch it. The "long-awaited" historical novel at issue, by a once-promising Texan or Georgian gone to seed, carried the heaviest advance (for a "serious" novel) in publishing history, and was ushered into the world by an immense pre-publication promotion campaign. Nearly everybody was gulled by it; but not my friend, who, when he had done with it, left not even bare bones, only a single scarlet stain on a field of blazing white. The author, a fair lightheavyweight with a "drinking problem" (as who has not?), so described in a scandal sheet, met my friend one dark evening just as the former was leaving a bar and the latter was emerging from the health food shop next door, his arms laden with sunflower seeds. To this day he swears that had his arms been empty, the story would have had a very different ending—"last scene" was the phrase he actually used. As it was, by the time the cops arrived, he was certain he was dead. The film company that bought the novel picked up the tab for damages under a Miscellaneous clause in the contract.

As he put it, he'd been slouching toward Bethlehem when Fame, like a puma, overtook him in a great bound —several, actually. After the first review he was, as a half-page ad in the *Times Book Review* averred, a "noted critic"; by the second he was "eminent"; "distinguished" and "leading" followed apace. "Major," he told me heatedly, he'd never become—he swore it on his mother's health. That might require a book, even if only a collection of reviews, and, by God's blood, he had man's work to do.

By happenstance rather than design, animated by rage and loathing, he had become the dissenting voice in American criticism. A rival grudgingly admitted he was "running a hot hand" with the inevitable freeze not yet in sight. He himself confessed to me the simple strategy was to go after the "big ones—hook them, slice them open, gut them, throw the rest to the sharks . . . then *duck*," he added with a grim chuckle. All in the name of the "sovereign imagination." His theoretical statements on the "new manner" were widely cited; the rest was dreck, at best "higher journalism." Never forget, he admonished me, that Art had pitched its mansion in the place of excrement. (I promised him I never would forget that, and I'm glad to say I never have.)

Happening recently to find myself in Manhattan after an extended stay abroad which I cannot satisfactorily explain, I ran into an old acquaintance. It being a shivering wintery day, half my face was swathed in coarse woolens. When I called his name the chap turned, looked, peered, blanched, started. After a long pause he recovered himself to ask after my health. Never better, I lied. Lost some weight, didn't you? he asked. A lot, I said. But you're better now? I was going to, but didn't, tell him there was nothing like cobalt, and that he must try it. In the cutting winds blowing in from both rivers we exchanged opinions on art and life, without conviction. Several times he asked after my health, and seemed, despite repeated assurances, not to be assured. In parting he shook his head in an attempt at rueful humor. Christ, he said, the things you hear in this town. Not in a million years, he said, would I be able to guess what he had heard about me. Nobody, not even in New York, lies about these things. He had heard, he didn't remember how long ago, and not once but many times, whenever my name came up in conversation, which was seldom, that I was . . . that I had. . . .

That day, before returning to my saltbox or "Cape Cod" or colonial in the country on the midnight train, I contrived to have sent me six or eight books for review in as many periodicals, all of them deadlined within the fortnight; and managed, through the kind offices of my western friend, to crash the largest of the publishers' cocktail parties to which he'd been asked; and there to the accompaniment of tinkling glasses, a most delicate music, arranged to have lunch with anyone who thought he/she might ever eat again; and stayed so late the host, a flexible man, had no choice but to ask me to dinner.

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DOSTOEVSKY AND THE SOWING OF SEEDS

JEFFREY MEYERS

Dostoevsky

JOSEPH FRANK

Princeton U. Press, $16.50

This handsome volume, the first of four, deals with Dostoevsky's life from 1821 to 1849, when the seeds of revolt were sown, and ends with his arrest for revolutionary activities which later led to a mock execution, a last-minute "reprieve" and four years of bitter exile in Siberia. Joseph Frank goes far beyond the biographies of Simmons and Magarshack in the shrewd examination of evidence, the masterful grasp of Dostoevsky's complexity and the thorough presentation of the intellectual, cultural and social background that shaped his mind and art. This is not a conventional biography, primarily concerned with the details of Dostoevsky's life, but an interpretation of his novels, which concern the spiritual crises of the intelligentsia and are a creative synthesis of Russian history, personal fate and literary evolution.

Dostoevsky was born in Moscow, the son of a successful doctor, a gloomy martinet given to uncontrollable explosions of temper, and a saintly and sickly mother who died in 1837. The following year Dostoevsky, at his father's insistence but against his own wishes, entered the Academy of Military Engineers in St. Petersburg which (like the Austrian military school later attended by Rilke and Musil) was dominated by harsh discipline and violent sadism, and which he described as one long torture. The news of Dostoevsky's lack of promotion in in 1838 (due to slackness in drill) brought on his father's apoplectic stroke; and the following year the doctor, who had gone to pieces after his wife's death, was murdered by the peasants of his country estate. Since the murder was almost impossible to prove, and a conviction would have led to the exile of all the male serfs and the destruction of the children's patrimony, the case was dropped. But it created profound guilt in Dostoevsky. Though Freud's famous essay, "Dostoevsky and Parricide," connects the violent death of the father with the onset of epileptic symptoms in the son, Frank proves there is no evidence for this assertion and that the epilepsy actually began in Siberia.

Shortly after he graduated the Academy in 1843 and joined the Engineering Department of the War Ministry, Dostoevsky was described as "slender, short, fair-haired, with a sickly complexion; his small grey eyes darted somewhat uneasily from object to object, and his colorless lips were nervously contorted." As a child Dostoevsky was afraid he would fall into a deathlike sleep and left notes at bedtime begging that his burial be postponed for five days; and he was secretive, evasive and the victim of a tormenting nervous illness as an adult. His radicalism and burning hatred of serfdom, for which he risked his life, had an emotional as well as an intellectual basis.

Dostoevsky was well-educated and widely read in Russian, French, German and English literature, philosophy and history; and his impassioned absorption in books led to a profound and valuable understanding of masters like Pushkin and Gogol, Balzac and George Sand, Schiller and Hoffmann, Scott and Dickens: "I read like a fiend, and reading has a strange effect on me. I penetrate into everything, I understand with precision, and I myself draw from this the ability to create."

Dostoevsky's first novel, *Poor Folk* (1846), was a sentimental tragicomedy, an effective and original synthesis of his Russian predecessors which portrayed sensitivity and moral refinement among the lowest class of people. It was acclaimed by Belinsky, the leading critic of the time, as the first social novel in Russian, and was an immediate success. But Dostoevsky's instant fame led to absurd egoism and vanity, and he was satirized in an effective poem by Turgenev—whom Dostoevsky later repaid with the merciless portrait of Karmazinov in *The Devils*.

Dostoevsky's other significant works of the late 1840s were *The Double*, a portrayal of consciousness obsessed by guilt and foundering in madness whose characters, however pathological, express his social and cultural criticism; *The Landlady*, a symbolic critique of Slavophilism and Russian Orthodoxy; and *White Nights*, an unusually delicate portrayal of adolescent emotions. By the time his first two novels were published, he was deeply in debt to his editor and had been forced into the lifetime pattern of writing for money and against his will.

Dostoevsky's promising literary career was truncated by his revolutionary intrigues, for in 1848 he recognized that the new freedom granted to people in western Europe was countered by severe repression in Russia. During that year he joined a radical group which planned to distribute inflammatory propaganda, spark a revolution in Russia and achieve his passionate ambition to free the serfs. But this rather naive and incautious group was infiltrated by a police spy who attended their meetings and made thorough reports to the authorities. In April 1849, before they could even agree to a plan of action,

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Dostoevsky was awakened at 4 A.M. by an officer of the secret police and was suddenly thrown into a new existence that would strain his spiritual and emotional capacities to the utmost.

Though his Siberian exile was an agonizing experience, recorded in *The House of the Dead,* Frank writes in a moving conclusion that it would also "widen the range of his moral and psychological experience. He would know the creeping and chilling despair of total solitude in prison; he would feel the desperate anguish of the hunted; he would live through the terrifying agony of the condemned clinging desperately to the last precious moments of life; he would sink to the lowest depths of society; and he would have instants of sublime inner harmony in the ecstatic 'aura' preceding an epileptic attack."

Polonaise

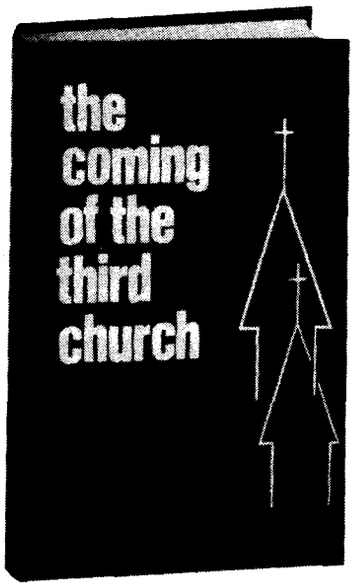
PIERS PAUL READ

Lippincott, $10

GERARD REEDY

Great literary works, it is said, not only break through language and form so that other, analogous works may be written; they also alter the reader's subsequent perceptions of literature. Thus it is that I am reminded throughout *Polonaise,* Piers Paul Read's enormously satisfying sixth novel, of Anthony Powell's twelve-volumed *Dance to the Music of Time.* Both Powell and Read cover the recent era—in *Polonaise* from 1928 to 1958—under the guiding metaphor of dance. Both self-consciously choreograph repeated gestures and situations, a technique that gives formal unity to their works; both, in different ways, end where they begin. Both novelists have an extremely firm grasp on their diverse characters and situations, even while these maintain lives of their own against the controlling themes of the sagas. Both write works about society, which for Read is the cafés, restaurants, flats, and country houses of Poland, France, and England. Both internalize the political events of the era, here the Spanish Civil War, the embrace of and apostasy from Marxism, the Stalinist purges, the second great war, and the apoliticism of the fifties. *Polonaise* even takes momentary symbolic interest in the French, post-Renaissance art which gives Powell his title.

In his far shorter space, however, Read is altogether more intense in his pursuit of meaning in the thirty-year *polonaise* of his main character, Stefan Kornowski, who is, like Powell's narrator, Jenkins, a writer. Powell's characters tread, as Jenkins writes, "the formal dance with which human life is concerned"; Read's Kornowskis—Stefan and his sister Krystyna—are altogether more passionate and erratic. In this novel, the *polonaise* is not a "formal dance." It is a movement through life that is motivated by instinct and passion, by the heart in conflict with the intellect and the patterns



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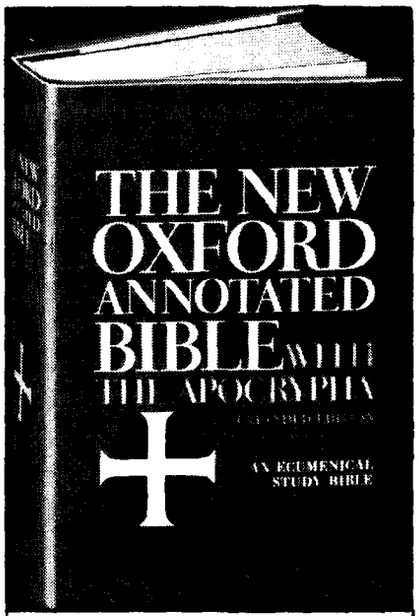

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of formal art, and, finally by the grace and providence of God.

For much of the novel, Stefan thinks life "a fraud, a charade, a dance, a polonaise of silly Slavs—while others marched." Stefan tries to be rigid in his ideologies, first Marxism then sadism. Long before he assents to the *polonaise* of life, the reader has watched events defeat his theories. Stefan tirelessly searches for an "action" which will consummate his current ideology. When he finally acts, to rescue his nephew Teofil's engagement from vivid evil, the one salvific act of his life, he has no "plan of action." He submits, in irrational acts, to life; it is only later that his mind catches up, and with this illumination, he dies.

Stefan derides and dismisses his "Polishness" through much of his life. Bruno Kaczmarek, Krystyna's husband, loves Poland and dies as a partisan during the war, attempting to save Rachel, Stefan's Jewish wife, from the Germans. In a childish attempt to keep the mortgaged family estate in Poland, Krystyna loses her virginity early in the novel; by its end she is indifferent to her first husband's wartime heroism, has married into the French bourgeoisie, and does not understand her son Teofil's increasing Polishness. Polish instinct and idealism clearly stand as moral norms against which Read measures each of his character's actions; however complex and ironic in its narration, *Polonaise* is also refreshingly and unabashedly nationalistic.

Stefan's disenchantment with Marxism begins when his cell prudishly asks him to keep the hero of his proletarian short story virtuous. Several of Stefan's short works are transcribed in *Polonaise;* the relationship between art and life is a central theme. Stefan's art, sometimes understood as a positive element in his moral growth, more often retards this. Stefan writes about sadism and several times tries and comically bungles making his art govern his life. At the end, moral and aesthetic resolution unite: in order to finish his romantic novel about Teofil and his fiancée, Annabel, he must defeat, in life, the forces that seek to corrupt this match. By this point it is clear that throughout his life Stefan has merely simulated evil; however harmful to himself, this play-acting is of a different order than the hateful, Jamesian evil of Annabel's family.

It is in grasping the reasons for his opposition to this evil that Stefan discovers, at the end, that God, whom he has long denied, exists. The structure of *Polonaise* in effect offers a proof for the existence and providence of God, from "conscience," although to state the matter this baldly disregards the vast imagery and episodic inventiveness that make the proof credible. *Polonaise* succeeds because Stefan's experience is real both inside and outside the theistic affirmation; this reader did not suspect that Stefan would end where he does until he in fact did. The religious resolution is both surprising and just.

Two remarks on the style of *Polonaise*: its prose never calls attention to itself, either by over-writing or by fuzziness, and is a cold, clear, marvelous achievement. The structure is as refreshing as the writing; *Polonaise* has what most good, contemporary novels lack—an ending.

The Communal Catholic

ANDREW M. GREELEY

Seabury Press, $8.95

JOSEPH CUNNEEN

Andrew Greeley presents the *Commonweal* reviewer with a loaded deck. Since the journal is frequently cited in *The Communal Catholic* as an example of Catholic elitism and self-hatred, any criticism of the book is apt to be interpreted as another piece of evidence for the existence of a sinister conspiracy against the National Opinion Research Center. On the other hand, praising this "Personal Manifesto" sometimes seems like taking a loyalty oath to Senator Daniel Moynihan and the late Mayor Richard Daley, while agreeing to turn over Dan Berrigan and

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assorted liberation theologians to the secular arm.

The Communal Catholic is a minor example of the Greeley *oeuvre*, hastily put together from journalistic byproducts of recent research. It would be unfair, however, to make a list of careless errors or to dismiss the work because most of its positions are predictable. *The Communal Catholic* ought to be read, perhaps especially by those who will not be completely convinced, because, whatever its inadequacies, it is a provocative summary of many of the major concerns of a priest-scholar who cares deeply about his church and his country, and makes an effective case for a positive, though not uncritical, reappraisal of the American Catholic experience.

Although references to it are scattered throughout the book, the title concept never produces the shock of a genuinely fresh insight, partly because it is never made sufficiently concrete. The polemical tone, although frequently entertaining, also gets in the way; the reader begins to suspect that people fail to get the gold star of "communal Catholic" largely because they have failed some crazy test of Greeleyian orthodoxy: Sydney Callahan, because she "viciously" attacked Michael Novak; John Cogley, because he was a "professional or official" Catholic.

Amusingly enough, Greeley himself would be about the last person one would describe as a "communal Catholic" since, from the days when he was having his message piped to the clergy courtesy of archdiocesan closed-circuit television to his present rages against the bishops—understandably provoked by his local ordinary—no one can have followed the zigs and zags of the ecclesiastical apparatus with more fascination. Of course, such attention might well be considered virtuous in a priest and sociologist, but it is to ordinary (and even "elite") lay people one needs to go for perspective on the "communal Catholic." Greeley himself recognizes that the phenomenon is hardly new; what he finds new, apart from the increase in numbers, is that "they are interested in the Catholic tradition and are not angry at the institutional church."

It is certainly true that until recently American Catholics relied excessively on foreign models; since American Catholic history was presented in largely ecclesiastical terms, without much reference to the mammoth social problems of the immigrant church, only specialists found it absorbing reading. Greeley is surely right in his insistence that some more profound impulses than nostalgia is at work among those communal Catholics now preparing a harvest of historical and sociological studies on aspects of the American Catholic experience, but why the wild exaggeration of "Not a single journal is ready to devote any space to a sympathetic though critical reevaluation of its meaning"? If *Commonweal* is turning down first-rate contributions in this area, I hope Father Greeley will be kind enough to give their authors the address of *Cross Currents*, where I will also have an eye out for those that might be publishable in larger, more commercially rewarding outlets. As someone reasonably familiar with anti-ethnic snobbery on pseudo-liberal Madison Avenue, however, I should be allowed to testify that I have yet to meet those elite Catholic editors who "are ashamed of and angry at the immigrant parish of their childhoods." More significantly, since Greeley still preaches confidence in the effectiveness of Catholic education, the recent Catholic high-school graduates I have been teaching seem mostly uninterested in their ethnic neighborhoods or larger Catholic traditions, leading me to fear that as more and more Catholics "make it" economically, pressures toward cultural assimilation will be more powerful than parochial schools in inculcating basic values.

Despite his verbal overkill, however, Greeley's suggestive remarks on ethnic parishes and communalism as a basis for urban government and social policy need to be thoroughly pursued. Even if the reader suspects that the author's astringent approach to many

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romantic fads might also be useful in analyzing Chicago neighborhoods, the possibilities of even highly imperfect coalition-building are too important to be ignored. If liberals are shocked by Greeley's claim that the best example of Polish-Black collaboration is under the banner of Chicago's Democratic organization, let them work to build a better one. Indeed, the whole chapter on the ethnic revival shows that when he is not indulging himself, Greeley is quite capable of making careful distinctions, even on a subject about which he feels deeply.

Greeley's reminder of the existence of anti-Catholic nativism in academic and other circles is surely useful, but would probably gain wider acceptance if coupled with more recognition of legitimate criticism of Catholic group behavior and hierarchical insensitivity to the pluralistic America he champions. Similarly, his encomium of Chicago's heavily Catholic ethnic neighborhoods would have greater credibility if he also explained why they might look quite differently to Black families seeking to move in, or simply living a few blocks away. To write that the data show "ethnic families are less likely to be racist and more likely to have been against the Vietnam war from the beginning" is worse than poor grammar; it is a superficial attempt at outdated apologetics. With all his very real achievements—about which he is probably correct to lament that he is widely envied by his fellow-priests (and who should not envy his productivity and the high level of his readability?)—why can't he get sufficient perspective on himself to understand that the veteran social-actionist Msgr. Charles Owen Rice was essentially right when, after getting Greeley's quick statistical comeback to a lament at Catholic racism, Rice cried out, "You and your damn facts!"?

Greeley should also practice more restraint in using the adjective "Catholic." Germans and Greeks are thrown *en masse* in his all-purpose Catholic ethnic stew, while the poor Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and other Hispanics get linked up with the Blacks as groups the media and the liberals are spending too much time on. Affirmative action is simplistically dismissed as anti-Catholic: does Catholic communalism have nothing more to say than that? As in so much discussion of ethnicity, there is the strange inability to keep in mind that a commitment to Christ is not transmitted biologically, and that even a loose sociological identification with Catholicism can no longer be inferred by reference to recognizable Italian, Polish, or Irish names. Finally, we need to hear more from those ethnics who suffered from Irish domination of American Catholicism, who will probably not be satisfied with Greeley's bland reassurance that "the Irish need no defense."

Greeley is right to call for more professionalism and to ask supporters of Freire and/or liberation theology to show the relevance of their theories to current issues in the United States. It is surprising, however, that he isn't more humbly curious himself since, although he scrupulously ignores any discussion of capitalism vis-à-vis Catholic communalism, he can hardly blame Garry Wills and Wilfrid Sheed for the superhighways that destroyed so many old neighborhoods. Nevertheless, Greeley's excessive reverence for computers is no excuse for not thanking him for a willingness to go on taking controversial positions and for a suggestive outline of opportunities—in the opening chapter of his section on "Resources for the Communal Catholic"—that could spark half-a-dozen special issues for any alert editor. And his conclusion, offering a prescription for "A Church for the Communal Catholic," gives me a sufficient data base to reveal that Andrew Greeley is a closet *Commonweal* Catholic.

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Portraits

RICHARD AVEDON

Farrar, Straus, $25

LINDA KUEHL

When Richard Avedon's "serious" photography had a gallery showing last season, viewers were known to respond, "How curious! Ugly photos by a *Vogue* man!" And, indeed, the photos were curious. If Avedon's fashion work divested his subjects of individuality, his serious work appeared bent upon accentuating it through egregious irregularity. If in fashion he glamorized for mercantile reasons, in serious he deglamorized for an apparent esthetic. That esthetic appears to have promised—inversely—that truth is not beauty, beauty not truth. It was the esthetic of a convert who did what converts usually do and that is swing to the opposite extreme. If fashion deified conventional beauty, art would deify its emphatic absence. Avedon took the romantic's perverse revenge. He positioned his subjects as if on a police lineup, under harsh lighting, against stark backdrop, with

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no special makeup or later flattering touching up. His merciless camera eye shot for flaws; his printmaking heightened them. This convert's inverse tactic now is manifest in the collection of his gallery photos under the title, *Portraits.*

Avedon's stratagem is the ironic twist that assaults the eye. He shows the Jesuit priest steamy with winged eyebrows and matted hair, the surgeon with a face like a death mask, the psychiatrist in the trough of despair, the caterer beefy as a butcher, the artist-painter as a Mafia hit man, the architect as a Brooks Brothers banker. The irony, apparently, is that the Jesuit is the Devil, the surgeon in need of his own knife, the psychiatrist of his own therapy, the caterer of catering, the artist of aesthetic transformation. As for the architect—Buckminster Fuller—the irony presumably is that the inventor of the geodesic dome looks like such a square.

Unpredictability becomes predictable as photo after photo bear out the principle of negative capability. The male fashion designer gazes predatorily like a seamy gigolo, representing the surreptitious speciousness of—what?—haute couture. The forbidding glance of the spinsterish fashion editor suggests that she herself needs beautification. The side-by-side mug shots of a Kansas City murderer and his resembling father suggest that murder is hereditary and verified by weird looks. The sneering Everly Brothers snapped in Las Vegas say that this sweet-harmonizing duo harbors heinous thoughts. The eleven members of the Mission Council in Saigon, circa 1971, show that they smile and smile and still are villains. The pouched, bloodshot, jaundiced visage of Truman Capote reverts him to the psychopathic criminals in his own book, *In Cold Blood.*

If you rejoinder that, well, such inferences are entirely in the eye of the beholder, you have to ask if there are any alternatives, especially when Avedon's subjects are over sixty-five? From Igor Stravinsky to Jorge Luis Borges to Vladimir Horowitz to George Meany, the accentuated bags, wrinkles, jowls and sagging smile lines—now frown lines—testify that age is an affliction. The matching hound dog eyes and droops of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor that Avedon—perversely—rivets upon speak for his rebound from the fashion photographer's obsession with youth.

The key to Avedon's youth-age dichotomy reveals itself through seven—extraordinary—portraits of his aging, dying father, Jacob Israel Avedon. Richard Avedon's own words in Harold Rosenberg's fine introduction give the clue: "Whenever he poses for me, he smiles and becomes benign, gentle . . . and somehow wise. He's interested in looking sage." Thus the son-as-protagonist comes into conflict with the father-as-antagonist, a relationship that presupposes his rapport with other elderly and otherwise serious subjects as well.

The exceptions are a poignant Marilyn Monroe, poetic-tough Jean Genet, passionate Ezra Pound, Buddha-like Henry Miller, even, maniacal Oscar Levant and corpse-like Groucho Marx. His heroic Gabriel Garcîa Márquez is a humorous play on Rodin's august Balzac. His two loving spoofs—Robert Oppenheimer envisioned as angelic seer and Marianne Moore as the wimpled saint—both look foolish but the photographer's conception is fresh and intrinsic and, therefore, justified.

The prevailing principle, however, is negative capability, and here again Avedon's words provide the clue. In describing how his family took their photographs—with borrowed dog and magnificent auto—he sums up: "Every one of the photographs in the family album was built around some sort of lie about who we all were." This disdain suggests why he took both paths at the fork in the road: he preserved the almighty childhood influence in fashion and exposed the ruse in serious work. For all the technical skill of the latter *and* its occasional gem, the drive to puncture pretense becomes evangelical and too often suspect. The pictures of his father work because the point of view emerges from his primal wrestle to get his

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independent artistic vision. Where that enters *a priori*, it becomes gratuitous. Truth may not be beauty but that does not mean it is its exclusive absence either. The absence, after all, is as conventionally perceived as its presence. The sheer accumulation of photos that marks the alienated photographer cannot legitimize the alienation however legitimate its original and specific source. If Avedon photographs out of love for his material, he has a converse way of loving.

North

SEAMUS HEANEY

Oxford U. Press, $5.95

DANIEL J. CASEY

North, Seamus Heaney's fourth collection, is his best to date. Ireland's most talented living poet, fascinated yet by dark mythologies, drives the shaft "inwards and downwards," penetrating a bottomless bog that surrenders neolithic shards and shrunken heads of Jutland man-killers. The vision of "the Tollund Man" (*Wintering Out*, 1972) still haunts the poet. But if Heaney's latest bog thrusting turns up bones and things, it also dredges the race memory and pricks our consciousness of primal instincts lately roused.

There is subtle ambiguity in his title. "North" conjures the mindscape of a battle-scarred Ulster but suggests, too, the poet's obsession with Icelandic sagas and Stone Age swordsmen of the frozen wave:

> I face the unmagical
> invitations of Iceland,
> the pathetic colonies
> of Greenland, and suddenly
> those fabulous raiders,
> those lying in Orkney and Dublin
> measured against
> their long swords rusting,
> those in the solid
> belly of stone ships,
> those backed and glinting
> in the gravel of thawed streams
> were ocean-deafened voices
> warning me, lifted again
> in violence and epiphany.

Responding to undulating rhythms of "fabulous" Norsemen exhorting him to rhyme in darkness, the poet senses, in their violent voices, soul warnings from an heroic Northern past to a tragic Northern present. In fact, most of Heaney's selections in Part One commemorate dark deeds and celebrate mossy ancestors lifted piecemeal from the peat to give us psychic revelations of ourselves.

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REVIEWERS

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In "Belderg" it is the spectacle of the cyclopean quernstones "piled like vertebrae" and the mysterious phonic marriage of a bogland name that signify the "congruence of lives" and prompt our fierce imaginings. In "Funeral Rites" it is the recent victim of a "neighbourly murder," craving rhythmic requiem that spurs the poet's resolution:

I would restore
the great chambers of Boyne,
prepare a sepulchre
under the cupmarked stones,

he insists. And in "Viking Dublin: Time Pieces," he probes for involuted logic in the serpentine patterning of artifacts, but finds in them the ineluctable common denominator of tribal retribution. In the early poems of *North* the genetic memory runs wild.

"Come to the Bower" and "Bog Queen," necromantic fantasies of decayed loveliness, suggest a macabre sexuality. The slashed throat of the tarcast Grauballe Man and the shaven and severed heads of an adultress ("Punishment") and an ax-stunned maiden ("Strange Fruits") translate to further grim reminders of the here and now. The poems, "Bone Dreams" and "The Digging Skeleton," disinter more blackened corpses. But when the exhumations have been done, our poet-excavator contemplates the softness of the bog: in "Kinship" he admits

I love this turf-face,
its black incisions,
the cooped secrets
of process and ritual.

In the desolate waste, where stripped off layers of sod reveal eternities of savagery and passion, he makes his grove, assumes an Antaeus-like pose, interprets bog history with biting sarcasm:

Come back to this
'island of the ocean'
where nothing will suffice.
Read the inhumed faces
of casualty and victim;
report us fairly,
how we slaughter
for the common good
and shave the heads
of the notorious,
how the goddess swallows
our love and terror.

In this collection there are the same intriguing word plays, graphic images, mythos of place, and touches of wry Ulster humor that characterize Heaney's earlier successes, but, with saga impulses and bog ruminations, there are exciting added dimensions. In Part One of *North* Heaney is a word-wielder of considerable stature.

Part Two contains autobiographical poems written earlier (1966-72) and reflects on the troubles in the war-torn province. "Whatever You Say, Say Nothing" responds to the rhetoric of violence in calculated irony. "Orange Drums, Tyrone 1966" toys with a metaphoric lambeg pounding aerial hatred. It's not that the second part of the book is weaker; it's just that the ground has been covered before.

Success has not spoiled Seamus Heaney. In *North* he responds eloquently to criticisms of sameness in substance and form. The new poems are provocative, inspired, and well wrought.

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Abigail McCarthy (Cont.)

population, about food, about mass poverty, about the gap between the poor and the rich nations, about illiteracy, child morbidity, unemployment, and . . . about the very air we breathe, the food we eat, and the water we drink!"

Dorothy Day was one of those first feminists to go to jail in the struggle for suffrage. Over the years she has insisted on being taken seriously on the subjects Mrs. Sipila lists, and she has insisted that men share her concerns. She is very sure of which half of the world's population she belongs to, and is not threatened by sharing with the other, as the evidence inclines us to think that men may be. One cannot imagine Dorothy in a community of women alone. Her relationships are a continual affirmation of the need of one sex for the other in our common endeavor. She is wifely

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in this affirmation and true to her own bent and experience. As a young woman she loved a man, and considered bearing their child one of the greatest moments of her life and one which led her to God. "To think that this thing of beauty . . . had come from my flesh, was my own child! Such a great feeling of happiness filled me that I was hungry for Someone to thank, to love. . . ." Her motherhood and grandmotherhood have been a source of her meditation and inspiration.

Through the years she has led in a woman's way by letting the motley communities of the Worker form and function autonomously—"like families" —and by constant visitation, by listening, by reiterating the principles over and over again—but also by lending her presence again and again, a mother and a sister, in prison with war resisters, in prison with the farm workers, submitting to body search and abuse in her old age. Yet in a day of obsession with liberation her relevancy —her insistence on feeding and sheltering the poor—is often questioned. She answers that questioning best herself:

"Perhaps it is easier for a woman to understand than a man. Because no matter what catastrophe has occurred or hangs overhead, she has to go on with the business of living. She does the physical things and so keeps a balance. . . . Now when women are putting their hand to the machine gun and joining in the violence which is racking us, the men join in the healing and nourishing . . . the cultivation and the preservation of the good earth. Now that there is neither bond nor free . . . we are a little nearer to the heavenly kingdom when men are feeding the hungry. It is real action as well as symbolic action. It is walking in the steps of Jesus. . . ."

Dorothy is fond of quoting Dostoevsky who wrote that love in dreams is greedy for immediate action, rapidly performed and in the sight of all. "But active love," he says, "is labor and fortitude." She continues to show us what that means.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 291)

program of teachings, some of them repugnant to Christianity as the Catholic Church understands and proclaims it. If Feeney himself is no longer well enough to deal with the theological issues involved, and wishes to be reconciled with the Church, few would quarrel with the decision of the bishops concerned to make every allowance for him. But how, then, is it possible to justify his continuing to remain pastorally the superior of his group? And if the group as a whole is unwilling to profess the Catholic faith as the Catholic Church teaches it, why are priests ordained for them, and why are they allowed to regard themselves as an incipient religious house?

PHILIP F. O'MARA

Opposing Tyranny

Rochester, Mich.

To the Editors: As Argentine born, with family and many friends in Argentina, I would like to thank Fr. Drinan and *Commonweal* for the article "Repression in Argentina [Feb. 18]. Articles like this one, and campaigns like the one conducted by Amnesty International are the only hope that thousands of innocent people have to save their lives and the only hope that the world has for a more humane political system in Argentina.

It is true that apathy has taken over the Argentine people, apathy that can be explained to a large extent by the catastrophic administration of Peron and his wife. But to say that "there is not one courageous person in all of Argentina" is contradictory with the rest of Drinan's paper. The guerrillas are fighting, and thousands of courageous Argentine people, including priests, are being killed by the military, precisely because of their courageous opposition to the military tyranny.

It is the institutions that have ceased to function properly in Argentina: the state, the military, the press and the

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church. The task of dismantling all organizations was started not 20 years ago as Drinan suggests, but in 1930 when the military for the first time took the government over by force. Shortly after that time the army became an instrument of international fascism. Peron, their recognized leader, was an ally of Hitler and Mussolini. In 1940 I could not find half a dozen Argentine military men sympathetic to England and the U.S. The Argentine people were divided then in their sympathies, but the majority was on the side of democracy, and could count on the support of the USA, against the military supported by Hitler and Mussolini.

Forty-five years of military tyranny have changed the mind and soul of Argentine people. Peron in particular, a product of the military caste, corrupted ideals and consciences. But the Argentine people changed less than the policies of the U.S. governments. Father Drinan cannot ignore in his analysis that the same U.S. that in 1940 was the leader of democratic-minded people all over the world, had become in 1975 the support of most fascist regimes in the world, the friend of the military and in cases like Chile, Uruguay, Guatemala, etc. the actual agent of the transformation of democratic regimes into fascist dictatorships. This change in international policy corresponds to a deep change that has taken place in the USA. We also have become militarized. Force has been our number one instrument of international policy and money for the Pentagon, the number one element of domestic policy. We broke all the rules of international democratic behavior under Johnson, and all the rules of democracy at home under Nixon. We should not be surprised therefore if fascist regimes continue to grow in many countries. Our power, our example and our influence in the world work for their development.

Our responsibility for the persecutions in Argentina cannot be ignored. Today the military in all of South America are the children of the Pentagon. Almost all South American countries have become fascist and if our own system of government in the U.S.A. has not collapsed it is because we are lucky. We have 200 years of democratic tradition, rooted in Britain, which South America does not have. And we do not have an all-powerful neighbor that by its mere presence determines our way of living.

As Drinan suggests, the situation of *La Prensa* is pathetic. The old bastion of democracy has become a tool of the military. The only hopeful sight in the whole picture is the Catholic Church. Slowly, following a world change, the same church that put Peron in power is expressing concern for human rights. But the "brave and wise Catholic leaders" who told Drinan that a confrontation Church-State would not be productive in Argentina are dead wrong. As in the case of Spain, the Catholic Church owes the Argentine people an apology. The Argentine bishops also should say: "we made a mistake," and work intensively to atone for it. But even more than that, if the church does not speak, the guerrillas will. The guerrillas are leaders by default. Correcting Drinan's quotation we should say that guerrillas "should not be the only courageous persons in all of Argentina." Is that not the meaning of what we have been told: if we do not speak, the stones will?

A.J. DURELLI
John F. Dodge Professor
of Engineering
Oakland University

P.S. on Women Priests

Chicago, Ill.

To the Editors: Anent "An Open Letter to the Apostolic Delegate:" as John Cogley would have observed, "Every little movement has a Jebbie of its own." However, this opinion seems to have a number of these Jesuits and a nice piece of scholarship flows from their concerted attention to the question of women priests in the Catholic Church. The letter expresses my sentiments.

One of the local newspapers quoted a Roman source that the most devastating argument against women's ordination lay in the fact that Jesus was not a woman. My unholy thoughts on this alternative for Almighty God I will choose not to write down here, but in my estimation the assertion is pathetically puerile. I am a Sister (not a Nun) and have no personal ambition to the priesthood. I have already qualified in two learned professions and age lies heavily upon me. But when I think about it I know many women whose qualifications for the priesthood are adequate or better. If the needs of the Church demand more priestly services than men seem willing to give, certainly it would be immeasurably preferable that women be commissioned to administer to these needy ones.

These sentiments I would put as a P.S. to the Letter to the Apostolic Delegate—not to improve it but so that the one lonely Sister-signer will have some companionship.

MARY LIGUORI BROPHY, B.V.M.
(LL.B., PH.D.)

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